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MAGAZINE

November 2008 \$3.95

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KTM



On the cover: We get the first ride on KTM's new 400XCW, and it's a cool combination of new engine, frame and suspension in a package that feels as comfortably familiar as the old 400. A noted NETRA AA rider does the wheelie, Paul Clipper shot the picture.

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Warning: This month's disclaimer is dedicated to the guy who called today and said that this was his favorite part of the magazine. If we knew that sooner, we wouldn't have wasted so much time putting together the rest of the book. It's all just entertainment anyhow, which is all dirt riding is supposed to be. You shouldn't take it too seriously, it's an amateur sport. Dress to protect yourself at all times. Ride slowly and carefully if you don't know what you're doing, and please move over so the rest of us can get by quickly. It'll come to you eventually, trust us. Just always be careful and remember: it's not our fault.

Business Stuff

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Back Issues: A limited number of back issues are available from various years of Trail Rider. Learn about back issues from www.trailrider.com or call 800-426-4214, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays. Don't use the shotgun approach and tell us to "send all the mags with XR400 tests" or we'll have to disappoint you. (Hint: We never had an official XR400 test bike).

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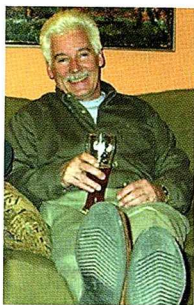
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Last Over

by Paul Clipper

The Secret Weapon

Hey, do you want to add some excitement to your riding? Do you want to make your bike feel like you just picked up ten horsepower and unlimited traction? And all you have to do to get this is change your rear tire?

It's not much of a secret weapon, though. At least two years ago, people started showing up with observed trials tires on the back of their bikes. More than two years ago, I know I saw David Knight ride the Endurocross two years ago with a trials tire. Last year it seemed everybody had to have them at the Endurocross, and then after that race the promoters decided that they were going to outlaw trials tires for the event because it was too much of an advantage.

I saw and heard, but I didn't pay much attention. Charlie started using a trials tire and raved about it. I figured I'd try one when the opportunity presented itself, but in the mean time I wasn't going to lose any sleep over it.

Then Drew Smith of Works Enduro Rider sent me a Vee Rubber VRM308R trials tire to try out. It sat in the garage for a while, but then I had shredded both the tires on my bike at the Quarry Run, and was looking around for new rubber to mount. I figured I'd put a new Dunlop 745 on the front—the 745 is the replacement for the awesome but no longer produced 739—and the trials tire on the rear. I friend of mine came into the garage after I was done, looked the bike over, and said "That bike isn't right. What's up with that tire on the back?"

He doesn't ride much any more, and maybe assumed what I had put on there was the equivalent of the Trials Universal tire that plagued the wheels of all the new "dual purpose" bikes of the '70s. But he was right, it sure looks odd to have a relatively skinny, relatively smooth-tread tire on the back of a 450 four-stroke. I wasn't even sure if the tire wasn't too skinny, it was after all a 4.00 X 18. But I figured I'm going to ride the Ammonoosuc turkey run on it, and we'll see what happens.

The Ammo was pretty much typical New England riding, the stuff we all love. We had plenty of dry weather leading up to the event, and then we had the last shreds of hurricane Hannah or some such storm the day before the ride. When we got there it was all wet, roots, ruts and mud, and plenty of slippery rocks. We started on the asphalt, and that's one place where this particular trials tire doesn't work too well. Even with 12 pounds of pressure it's pretty squirmy on a paved road. Oddly though, the tire is DOT approved, so it's perfect for a dual sport mount, just as long as your riding doesn't include a long, high-speed commute.

Once on the trail though, the new, odd-looking rubber shined like your grandfather's old brass pocket watch. Wet rocks and roots? No problem. You know how we talk about knobby tires "digging down" and getting traction? The trials tire doesn't dig-down, it just sticks like suction cups. For the first time in my life, on this Sunday, I rode a whole NETRA turkey run without ever once spinning my rear tire on a root. All this tire did was hook up, all day long. It thrusts the bike forward like the back end of the bike has claws instead of knobs. In all the mud and slippery conditions, I have to say I've never felt anything like it.

It was funny though, the back tire got so much traction it was plainly over-driving the front tire into

things. I may have never slipped the back tire all day, but it was simple to gas it and skid the front tire, especially if it was on anything really slippery, like a greased flat rock. This is a prime situation to put you on your side, so it's something I had to be ready for. One thing's for sure, the Dunlop 745 does not grip wet rocks like the 739 did. Dunlop doesn't make the 739 any more, and I'm not the only NETRA rider who's going to miss it.

The only place the trials tire didn't work so great on was topsoil-mud and wet turf. The really sticky, loamy mud would fishtail the bike unless there was rock right under the surface to grab hold of. Most knobbies don't work well here, either. Also, I hit the brakes coming down a small hill on a grassed-over powerline two-track, and the back tire slid so well that I swear the bike sped up. Probably a new knobby would work better here, a used one would have worked almost as bad as the trials tire.

Another observation: Laying the bike over and gassing it on a hard-packed dirt road. You know how you can spin a knobby and hang the back end of the bike out, flat-track style? It can't be done on a trials tire. Well, it can't be done unless you really gas it stupid-hard and unweight the back end. You're more likely, again, to push the front wheel in the turn rather than slide the back end.

I really am impressed. The tire was so much fun to ride on I found myself doing all sorts of stupid, fun things on the bike that I don't usually do. I can think of rides or situations where I'd be just as comfortable using a typical rear knobby, and I'm sure I will in the future. But for right now this tire is staying on the bike until it's worn out.

The Vee Rubber VRM308R is one of the lower-priced trials tires, and WER has them in stock. The one we have is a tubeless style, though of course I use it with a tube because I don't have tubeless rims. It costs about 90 or 100 dollars, depending on the daily price of oil or whatever else. You'll hear Michelin is the best trials tire, and it should be at about \$180 a pop, but they're also so soft and flexible I'm not sure that they may be the best trials tire for strict trials riding. If you can afford one, try it out. Dunlop also makes a good trials tire, for about \$120 each. There are others available, from all the various tire companies, but be aware that the really cheap Cheng Shin trials tire is actually the modern version of the Trials Universal dual purpose tires of years gone by, and may not perform as well as you might expect.

Speaking of tires, this past summer has been a tire-changing frenzy. Near as I can tell, I've changed twelve tires in the past three weeks, which was quite a change from last year. I already wrote about it, but I think last year I only changed one tire, and it was a flat. This year, as you recall, I rode the old tires on the old bike at the New Hampshire Classic, and hated them. So I got the bike back in the garage, cleaned it off and let it sit until right before the next ride a month later then I put two new tires on it, my last 739s, figuring I'd use the bike in the Quarry Run. Well, as luck would have it, my new bike came in early, and rather than use the stock tires on the new bike, I swapped

those two tires with the new 739s on the old bike. Then, I sold the old bike to a friend, who insisted I take the "stock" tires off that I had just put on (Pirelli ISDE/DOT legal tires) and instead put on "something decent."

Well, I did want to sell the bike, and the customer is always right, so I put a set of Dunlop 745s on the old bike and delivered it. So what is that, so far, six tire changes on two bikes?

Before I continue, let me insert a plug for my new favorite tire irons, the Motion Pro T-6 Combo Lever. They have a box wrench on the end the same size as your axle, and the 12/13 Combo is specifically designed for putting a tire ON, while the bigger ones are made to take a tire OFF. Get one of each. They're aluminum so they're real light to carry and they don't scratch the rims as easily (painted KTM rims). I've wrestled some massive tires with these tools and they do a perfect job.

Then I rode the Quarry Run on the new bike, and toasted both tires completely, so I changed both of them. In doing so, I got the trials tire on the rear rim before I realized it was directional, and of course I had it on backwards. I wouldn't normally reveal that I'm capable of such mistakes, but I'll tell you this one time, just as long as you promise not to tell anyone else. In my defense, the trials tire only had the directional arrow on one side, and I looked on the other side for it. So I had to pry the trials tire off—no easy feat with a tubeless tire—turn it around and put it back on. Three more tire changes.

In the mean time, my girlfriend and I went out for a ride on the 950. Before we went out I put a new Pirelli Scorpion dual sport tire on the back, and odd as it might seem I must have pinched the tube because it had a slow leak that I didn't know about. We stopped for ice cream about 40 miles from the house, and got back on a bike with a flat rear tire. I of course packed no tools and no tube, and it was of course Labor Day Sunday. We were lucky to get back by airing it up to about 55 pounds at every gas station on the way to the house. Fixed that once I got a new tube, so that's two more tire changes.

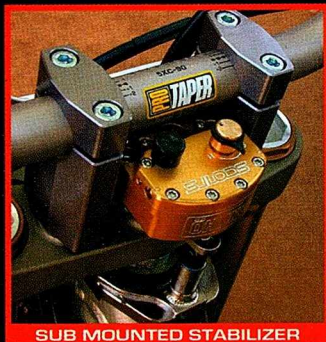
Then I have this street bike here (a classic 1974 Honda CB750K4 with 2300 original miles on it) and it's been rolling around on 35 year-old tires. So I finally got a new set of tires for it, and replaced the front tire first. Went back into the garage after lunch, and the front rim was on the concrete. Damn! I was certain I hadn't pinched the tube, but there it was, flat. So I pulled the wheel, took the tube out and checked it for holes. Didn't find any, so I dribbled soapy water in the valve stem and there was the leak. A bad Schrader valve. Might have taken 30 seconds to fix if I would have checked it on the bike, but no, Mister Efficiency has to take the tube out to find out the valve is bad. I fix that, mount the tire and then spend 45 minutes trying to get the wheel back on the bike because something in the ancient disc brake system is out of whack. I mount the new rear tire with a new Schrader valve. That's three more tire changes.

Oh, and I have a new tire I want to try on the 950. I think I'm going to get a tire-changing machine. ▲

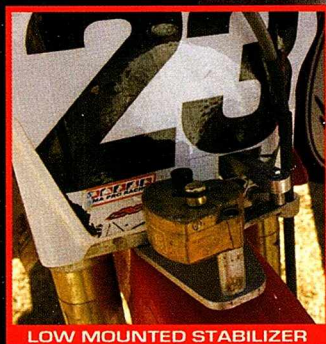


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by Rick Sieman

The Checkup

The doctor will see you now, Mr. Learnihan." The pretty young nurse smiled with a mouth full of perfect teeth and motioned to the door down the hall.

Learnihan put down his copy of National Geographic, wondering half-heartedly if he'd ever get the chance to finish the article on "Your Friend the Spotted Owl."

"Yo. Doc Watson. Learnihan here. Got the results of my checkup?"

"Oh, yes. Come in and have a seat. Well, it turns out that you're a pretty healthy sort for a man in his 40s who races motorcycles. However, the x-rays are sort of weird."

"Weird?"

The doctor scratched his nose before speaking. Since it was a sizable nose, considerable scratching was required. "Take a look at this x-ray here. Now, this is your torso."

"Yeah. I figured that out when I saw the ribs."

"Very funny. Take a look at this area here. It appears that you had six broken ribs on the right side, rather high up, and judging by the buildup, I'd guess that the injury is quite old. I don't recall you coming in here for that sort of injury, and I've been your personal physician for over 20 years now."

Learnihan studied the gray film for a minute. "Oh, that? Musta been about four years ago when I got off real hard and landed on that rock. Man, I couldn't breathe right for two weeks."

"You never came in for a checkup?"

"Naw. In fact, as I recall, I raced the next week, but I didn't do too good. My side hurt something fierce."

Doctor Watson sighed. "Lord's sake, man, you just can't take things like that for granted. You might have punctured a lung or something!"

Learnihan gave a crooked smile. "I didn't, did I? Saved me 75 bucks for a visit with you."

The good doctor grumbled. "Back then, it was only \$65. A bargain. But back to the x-rays for a minute. See this shot of your shoulder? Well, the collarbone is not exactly lining up. In fact, it looks like a lightning bolt. Want to tell me about that?"

Learnihan laughed. "That was a more or less ordinary whack from a low-hanging tree branch. Of course, when the branch is three inches thick and you're doing 45 on a fast fire road, it can nail

you real good. The guy in the ambulance in the pits put everything back into place and gave me a sling to keep my arm in place. I used my head and didn't race for three weeks. Looks like it healed real good. Well, not real good, but okay."

Doctor Watson reached into his desk drawer and pulled out a pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes. He lit one and mumbled, "You make me smoke. You and that damned attitude of yours. I quit

deal."

"I see. Mister tough guy, huh? You know, I can go into that knee with a scope, do a quick porting job, get rid of the junk and you'll be like new."

"Naw. Why bother? Anyway, what's this x-ray here?"

Doctor Watson clipped it up on the viewing screen. "This is your right hand, and if you'll take a close look, you can see where there's a foreign object about as thick as a pencil and about two inches long. It appears to be wedged in the back of your hand between the second and third fingers. Would you care to tell me the fascinating story about this?"

Learnihan smiled weakly. "Oh, that? Well, I was rippin' along one day about two months ago and sort of overshot a turn and blew through a bunch of tree branches. Broke my visor, bloodied my nose and knocked me clean off the bike. There was a branch sticking into my hand like a little spear, but I got out a pair of side-cutters that I always carry in my fanny pack, and I pulled it out. I made a bandage out of duct tape and a piece of my T-shirt and that seemed to stop the bleeding real good. Guess I didn't get it all out, huh?"

The Doc lit up his second Lucky Strike of the year. "Nope. Not only that, you are right now running a temperature of 106 degrees and that piece of wood has infected your hand in a very serious fashion. Haven't you even felt a bit dizzy or hot as of late?"

"Yeah, but I figured it was just that nail I stepped on in the garage the other day. I was out working on my bike in my shower shoes and ran a big one right through my foot, but I poured a bunch of after shave lotion on it after I pulled it out with a pair of Channel-locks, then I bandaged it real good."

The Doc let out a big, big, big sigh. "Old buddy, I'm afraid I'm going to have to give you a tetanus shot. Just sit tight. I'll get the needle and be right back."

Doctor Watson went to his cabinet and got the big needle, loaded it up and headed back to his office. Learnihan took one look at the needle, blanched pure white and passed out.

Doc Watson lit his third Lucky of the year, and smiled. "Dirt bikers!" he mumbled under his breath. ▲



smoking ten years ago—except when I have to pay my medical insurance and you get a check-up. Why did you get this checkup anyway? It appears that you violate every rule of common sense I try to squeeze into that dumb head of yours."

"Had to, Doc. The old lady took out a big policy on me, and there was a clause in there that I had to get a full-tilt checkup and I figured as long as they were paying for it, I'd come and pay you a visit or three."

"Hmmm. What about that knee of yours? The x-rays show a lot of small bits of effluvia floating around in there. It can't be very comfortable."

Learnihan poked one of the Luckies out of the pack, peeled off the paper, wadded it up into a ball, popped it into his mouth, chewed a bit, then spit a wad of tobacco juice into the Doc's wastebasket.

"Nasty habit," grumbled the Doc.

"Not as nasty as smokin' 'em, Doc. Oh yeah, the knee. Well, there's a lot of stuff grinding around in there, but if I pack the knee in ice after a race, I can walk okay the next day. No big

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November 2008

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11-16 NETRA Toys for Tots Turkey Run, Assonet, MA
 11/16 ECEA Delaware Hare Scrambles #2 (302) 834-4411
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New Column or Substitute Column?

Okay, so everybody ran out of things to say, or so it appears. We get so little mail towards the end of summer that having a mail column is a chore, even if all we ever did was write all the letters ourselves. So when the mail slows to a trickle, what do we fill the space with? News! Hey, we can make up news just as quick as making up letters, and it's much more fun! This is like all the answers without all the dumb questions proceeding them. So put on your reading glasses and enjoy!

Charlie Hits The Road

Probably the biggest news this month is that Charlie Williams and his wife and close personal friend for many years, Wilma, have decided to pull the plug on the Idaho experiment and move back to Indianapolis. The original announcement of same caused quite a stir in the Naptown Department of Health and Human Services as they tried to block the proposed extradition, but to no avail. "I love Idaho," Mr. Williams was quoted as saying in the Firth, Idaho, Press-Democrat, "but I've ridden all the trails twice, skied all the slopes, and now it's time to move on to the next adventure."

And what is the next adventure, you

may ask? Well, we understand and he and Wilma are going back to Indy to open a bike shop/latte bar in one of the more fashionable suburbs in town. Which one exactly hasn't been revealed yet, in the interest of giving them the best chance with the housing authority, but stay tuned to Trail Rider and we'll let you know when the time is right!

Jack Lafferty Jr. Wins His Tenth

Jack Jr. is a legend in ECEA racing. He has been racing ECEA enduros since the early '80s; frankly, much earlier than rules about minimum age being widely supported. It's best to list Jack as "Age Unknown," since even he admits he may have won his first enduro trophy when he was 14, still in eighth grade. He won his first ECEA enduro championship in 1983, and backed it up by repeating in '84, '85, and '86. Four wins in a row would have been typical for a really good racer, but Jack battled with newcomer Kevin Bennett for the next half-decade and still repeated his overall win in '89, '91 and '92. In '93 and '94 he gave up the top spot to his brother Mike, who is now trying to win his ninth AMA National Enduro championship. But was Mike unbeatable in the mid-'90s? Apparently so, since his older

brother took the championship away from him in 1995. But brothers are supposed to fight, aren't they?

The next five years saw a variety of riders take the ECEA top spot, including Mark Spence, Billy Atkinson and Fred Hoess, and though Jack was right up there, it looked like he was winding down his career. Nope, not really,

because in 2000 he won it again. Maybe that was it, right? Keep in mind that during all this time, including the years following '00, Jack always seemed to appear on the podium at the end of the year, finishing second or third so many times even he doesn't remember the total number. Maybe 2007 would be his last big push, when he battled fiercely with Mike Bradway all season and finally finished second by just hundredths of a minute. But nope, he's gone and wrapped it up this year at the Moonshine enduro, two races before the end of the season.

"It feels really good," he told us, "I'm really enjoying this. You know, I think this time feels better than the first time!"

"The best part is when I win one of those events with a perpetual trophy, with all the names on it, and I look and see I won this event back in 1980. They're going to think it's my son winning after all these years!"

Hmmm...we're not even going to make a joke out of that one! Congratulations to Jack Jr., for his tenth ECEA series win over the past 25 years. We figure he's got at least another 25 years left. Watch out, Joe Galie!



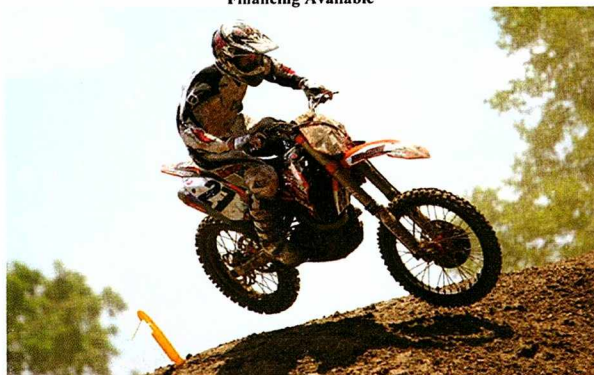
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Kawasaki Leads Endurocross

For reasons far beyond our desire to explain here, we've been unable to personally go to any of the Endurocross races yet this season. Charlie is going to Denver on his way back to Indiana, though, and he'll surely have something to say about that. But, in the mean time, the Kawasaki team seems to be dominating. Of course Taddy



Blasuziak is back, riding for KTM, and he did a great job of winning the first round in Vegas. But, at the second round, in Oklahoma, Ricky Dietrich emerged from the arena as the overall winner after Taddy was a no-show. The amiable Pole was undergoing facial surgery after literally breaking his face in a crash at another race. Since Oklahoma, another Kawasaki teamster, Damon Huffman, took the overall wins in both South Carolina and Denver, which happened this past weekend.

Huffman now has the points lead in the series, but Dietrich also has his sights set on the Geico Triple Crown, a \$50,000 cash award available to the person who wins Oklahoma, Ohio and the final round in Nevada. Since Dietrich won Oklahoma, he's the only person eligible for the Triple Crown, so expect things to get really exciting if Dietrich wins in Ohio!

Myler's Moved

We've been running an ad for the Mylers for quite some time. They have the ad in the back of the book that says "We Can Fix It!" and they repair radiators with an epoxy process. They do a good job, too. They can't fix a radiator that's been crushed beyond recognition, but we've sent them some leakers they've

fixed up fine. Well, they moved their shop and we forgot to change their address for a while, the new address in the ad is the correct one, and you can still reach them at 800-367-7699. Give them a call if you need a radiator fixed.

Moto Baja

What we need is yet another Baja tour company, right? Well, Paul and Dave of Moto Baja want to do things a little differently. Rather than starting way up north in Baja on the California line, they own property way down south in Baja, near Loreto, and they want you to fly into Loreto and let them take care of your two-wheeled recreation. We like

this idea because the border towns are scary, what with the drug wars and typical hustling going on. The farther south in Baja you go, the more laid back it gets. Paul and Dave both hail from northern New England, so you know they speak Yankee. We understand they have a November tour all filled up, and we're not sure what their schedule is for December and the new year. We do know that winter time is the best time in Baja, and we want to go as soon as we get the auxiliary fuel tanks fitted to the Trail Rider corporate jet. Give them a call for more information, at 603-447-1198, or look them up on the Web at MotoBaja.net. ↑



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Exit Bumps

The kind of bumps we're talking about are the square-edged bumps you find at the exit of a turn. You come out of the turn in second gear, maybe grabbing third, and if you hit them wrong your feet fly off the pegs and the bike wants to swap to the outside or throw you over the handlebars. The reason this happens in square-edged bumps is simple: you hit them with the front wheel, the suspension compresses and it rolls over the bump; then before the forks start to extend the back end hits. With the front end already down it's easy for the back end to kick up. If you're still sitting down, the problem is worsened; and if you're sitting too far back you can really get into trouble. Also, many riders back off the throttle when they see a bump like this, while keeping the throttle on and maintaining the spin of the rear wheel will help pull the back end down. So what is the proper way to get over acceleration bumps?

Mini Wheelie

To keep the back end in control, you want as much front suspension available as possible. In other words, you don't want to compress the forks on the face of this bump. To accomplish this, be ready to do a little wheelie right before your front wheel is going to hit the bump. Make sure to choose a gear that will give you plenty of instant power, even though you're already accelerating—don't try it in a gear too low or you'll never get the front end up.

Just before you reach the face of the bump, give the engine a little clutch and a blast of throttle. You want to lift the front wheel just to the top of the bump, and not much higher. In the best situation, you'll just skim the top of the bump, and then with the front end completely unloaded, the forks are ready to lend a hand when the back end compresses. The back end will hit the bump, but rather than force the front end farther into the ground, it now has to push the front end down to the ground, and then

compress the fork springs. In effect, you have a whole lot more travel available in the front to soak up the impact of the rear.

While this is happening, you want to be on the gas. Keeping the back wheel driving will help keep the rear end on the ground. It will want to kick up, but with the power on it'll be very difficult for it to do it. If there is a group of bumps at the exit to the turn, the question is how many can you carry? The technique is the same, except now you have to carry the front end over as many of the bumps as you can, and when you put the front end down, try to drop it on the down side of one of the bumps. If there are still more ahead, use the up side of the next bump to lift the front end back up, and then repeat the process until you're in the clear.

We're going to add a little bit about your bike, though. If your suspension is adjusted badly you're never going to feel comfortable in harsh bumps like this. Having your bike set up prop-

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The bumps in this spot aren't terribly serious, but this rider from the Sandy Lane has the right idea. Weight forward, aggressive stance, on the throttle and keeping the front end light.

erly for you, with your suspension adjusted right, makes a tremendous difference.

The easiest thing to do is read over your bike's owners manual and see what is available in suspension adjustments, and start out by trying that. Spend an afternoon changing your settings radically, ride the bike carefully, and note what differences are made. You might even be able to make your bike work great with just a screwdriver. If not, a good suspension tuner will work wonders.

The Proper Position

Obviously, you don't want to pull this stunt with your butt planted on the back of the seat. You can do it sitting down, but not sitting in the motorcycle. Let your butt touch the seat, but keep all the weight on the footpegs. Just like 90 percent of the rest of the riding you do, you want to be as far forward on the seat as the gas tank will allow. This does two things: it forces you to keep your arms bent, and ready to soak up any front impacts, and it keeps your rear end out of any threat from the back of the seat.

If you ever have trouble remembering the proper riding position, think of a see-saw—if you're sitting on the ends of the see-saw, you're going to go up and down; if you're sitting in the middle it can't do anything but rotate under you. Also, keep in mind that the handlebars, seat and footpegs never fly off the bike. The reason for this is because they are attached, they move with the bike always. If you move with the bike, and flow with its movements rather than fight it, you, also, will hardly ever fly off the bike. ↑

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Old is New

So Austria decided for 2009 to throw a bone back to us 400 lovers and re-introduce the 400. How does it feel, that's the question. Well, it feels good. The 400XCW uses the "R" model engine introduced last year, KTM's brand new four-stroke engine. It has a number of features that make it better, but when it's running it's not what we'd call different from the old RFS engine. Confused yet? Let's see if we can explain what we mean as easily and quickly as possible.

We got an '08 450EXC here a couple months ago, and replaced an '07 450EXC with it. The '07 was the old reliable RFS engine, the '08 is the new "R" engine. Doing nothing other than riding the two bikes back to back, you would have a very difficult time telling which engine is which (we tried a blind comparison, but the tester riders kept hitting trees). Power characteristics between the two of them are all but identical. If anything, we will concede that the new "R" model engine revs just a little bit easier in the midrange than the old RFS engine. That's it. If your friends tell you that the new engine is "so much faster!" than the old one, they're feeding you candy. We can't feel any major difference in

A lot of us lamented the loss of the 400EXC/XCW from the KTM lineup in the past two years or so. Yes, the power-hungry out there declared the 400 "anemic, weak and wimpy," and the bigger-is-better crowd took every chance to belittle any of us who said that the 400 was the better bike. But did you know that when Mike Lafferty switched to a four-stroke racer a few years back that his bike of choice was the 400? Or that the first year the 400 wasn't available, Mike's race bike was a 450 turned into a 400 with the previous year's engine components? We're not sure this was common knowledge outside of the immediate circle, but we know it to be a fact.

The problem with the 450 versus the 400 was that the 450 was/is a beast. If you like that sort of thing, the 450 has a violent "hit" in the midrange that will launch the bike like a catapult, or stand it up on its rear wheel instantly. It's fun when you're fresh, maybe, but get a little tired and trying to ride a bike like that is a real chore.

We're not saying that Mike Lafferty ever gets tired. What we're saying is he's smart and experienced enough to know that it's a lot more effective to have the least amount of power you absolutely need, and to use all of it. That way you get into less trouble unexpectedly; it's a whole lot easier than trying to hold excess horsepower back.

We also know that when Lafferty had to switch to a real 450, a lot of time was spent by him and Alan Randt figuring out how to set up the 450 so it ran more like a 400. We know they went through a lot of careful tuning to get it to that point.

As an aside, the street legal versions of the KTM four-stroke are the 450EXC and the 530EXC. We loved the 450EXC when it came out, even though the 450XC was a bike we'd prefer to stay away from. Why? Because the EXC version is tuned differently and hung with a quiet, restrictive exhaust system that magically strangles the midrange hit of the XC and leaves you with a 450EXC that has power like an old 400 with just a little



torque, horsepower or power delivery between the two bikes, other than what we said about the new engine MAYBE revving a little quicker in the midrange.

So if you want to buy a bike based on which bike is faster, you might as well buy the old bike if you can get a deal, because there isn't that much difference. But, there is a big difference in the way the new "R" engine does its thing, and for that we'd recommend the new bike. Also, the new frame, new in '08, is worlds better than the '07 and earlier frame, but that's another story.

What the R model engine does better is this: The new engine uses a separate oiling system for the top end and the gearbox. The top end of the R model engine uses 600cc of oil and the gearbox uses 900cc of oil. In total, that's more oil than the RFS engine used by about 600cc, and that's a good thing. The other good thing is separating the engine oil from the gearbox oil. Case in point: We recently changed the oil on the 450EXC for the first time. The top end oil came out clean and nice, and the oil strainer was clean as well. When we changed the gearbox oil, the oil strainer was nearly plugged with crud, tiny bits of clutch material and whatever else. The magnetic pickup on



Once again the suspension has been changed significantly on the KTMs. We found the adjustments to be very responsive, and handling is excellent.

the gearbox side was also fuzzy with small bits of metal. In the RFS engine, all this crud would be fed through the top end and whatever the oil filter didn't get would be circulated through the cam and top end bearings.

Better still, in the new engine you can use two different types of oil. Although our manual for the new bike is only in Spanish (?), we can see that KTM recommends 10W50 motor oil in both systems, but we don't do that. We'll use a good 10W50 synthetic in the top end once the engine's broken in, and a good, plain old 80W gear oil, like Spectro gearbox oil, in the transmission. That way, there aren't any fancy friction fighting additives in the gearbox to play havoc with the clutch, and both systems get the kind of oil they should be using.

Also, the new R engine has two separate filter screens very conveniently built into the drain plugs, so you can clean them every time you drain the oil with no extra steps to do it. They're both different, so you can't get them mixed up. Also the top end uses a

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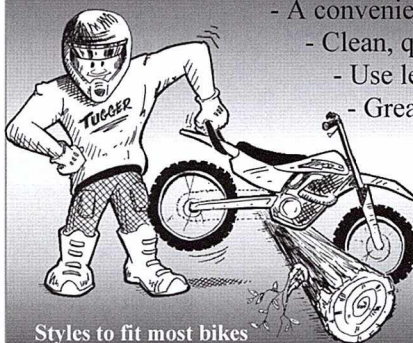
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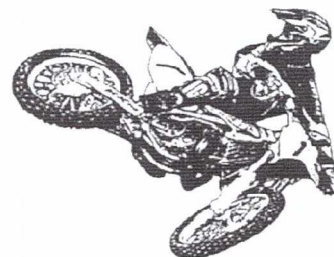
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new type of oil filter which is larger and obviously more free-flowing than the old filters on the RFS engine. And yes, just one filter instead of two. The gearbox only has the filter screen and a magnetic pickup to keep the chunks out of the oil.

What else is unique about the engine? Well, it has the typical KTM hydraulic clutch, that's good. The clutch plates are thicker than the old bike, 2.7 to 3.0mm for the friction plates, and the steel plates are perforated to hold oil. To keep the oil flowing, the

clutch basket has additional lubrication holes drilled through it. They're also using a new clutch push rod that allows more oil to flow through it.

KTM also says they've improved the starting decompression system and the cold start jetting to make the bike easier to start at low temperatures. Haven't tried that out yet, it hasn't gotten cold yet. A new spark plug and ignition curve completes the whole starting and running package. Basically, the bike button-starts easily, and the kickstarter still gets it running with a minimum of fuss if you still have the energy to kick.

We did fiddle with the jetting in our test bike, to get it running better in semi-cool weather in New England. The jetting we used? Changed the pilot from a 42 to a 45, moved the needle clip from position 1 (leanest) to position 3, stayed with the stock main jet, and set the mixture screw to two turns out. With this jetting the bike idled really well, snapped off idle without gagging and revved cleanly.

Oh, and we like the power. Plenty of low end, though it feels deceptively flat off the bottom, have faith. It doesn't have the raw torque of the 450, but that raw torque sometimes just makes you spin or lift the front wheel unexpectedly. The midrange feels just as strong as the 450 and the top end is ample and rolls high up into the rev

range. You may miss the 450's down low/midrange torque, but we know for certain that you can climb any hill with the 400 that you can with the 450.

Chassis Stuff

The chassis remains the same for '09, same as the '08 chassis that is. We like the way this new frame handles. If we dare say it, the KTM four-stroke now handles very, very similar to the Honda CRF. That's not a bad thing, that's good. Honda has a way of making a really easy-steering, precise handling four-stroke that feels very light to the touch. The good part about all that is you can ride all day without getting nearly as tired. The KTM is not quite as spooky-light feeling in the handlebars like a Honda, instead it feels a little more solid. The only way you'll notice this is if you spend some time on your buddy's Honda, then switch back to the '08 or '09 KTM. Then get on an '07 KTM and you'll see a huge difference. This '08/'09 frame is a great handling frame.


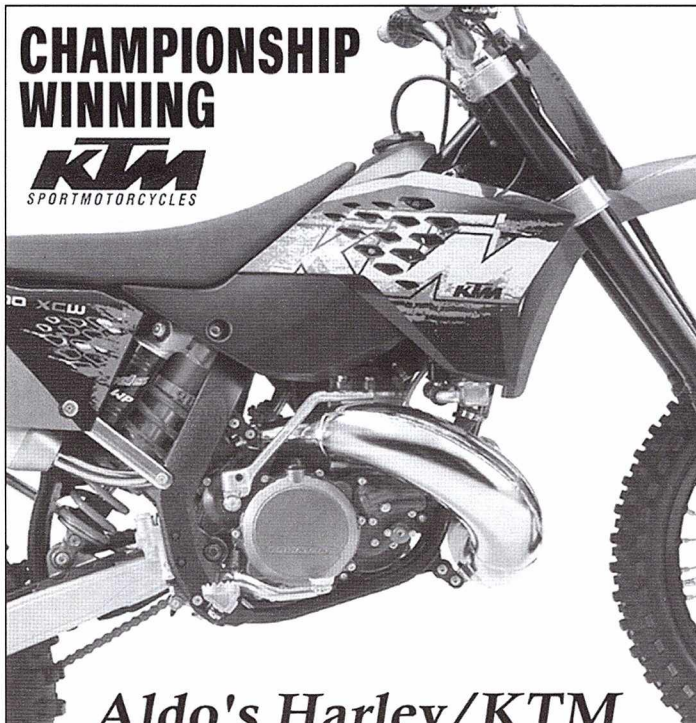
The suspension is supposed to be different, with updates to the fork and shocks. They do feel much better. Stock, we thought the suspension was solid and so-so, kinda skippy in the rocks. Then we got down and loosened up the compression damping in the forks and made the bike soak up a lot more of the sharp-edged stuff.

We backed off on the shock compression damping as well, with similar results. Since this was a brand-new bike, we'd have to concede that the suspension is going to work better after the components get a little time on them. If you're really conscientious you'll put 500 miles on the bike and then have the oil changed in both the shock and the forks. Then you can dial the suspension in, or at least try to get it a little closer. This bike feels pretty good new, but we're not going to tell you that taking it to a professional suspension valver won't be necessary. You know what you like,



They're not using the "R" designation on the engine any more, but KTM's new thumper motor is a great step forward, even though it runs very similar to the RFS engine.

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and if you can't get it with the stock adjustments, somebody else can make these suspension components work for you.

KTM's press info list a new "high-end Regina chain" as one of the new features for this year. One thing we've noticed is that some of the bikes seem to have a lot of resistance in rear wheel rotation. We thought it was a tight bearing, but then sprayed on some chain lube and the resistance went away. Near as we can tell the tightness comes from the o-rings in the chain. That will help seal dirt and water out for sure, but if you're really picky you know that tight o-rings are also robbing horsepower. Just something else for you to worry about. We don't think it's going to be much of a problem with a 400cc four-stroke.

The plastic and graphics on the bike are new this year. Well, the plastic pieces are the same, except for the radiator shrouds. The shrouds are smaller and more tucked in, which means some of you guys are going to have a harder time ripping them off on trees. The bikes come with plastic frame guards stock, so you can put them on and protect your frame rails where your boots rub them.

We're told that the clutch and ignition covers are redesigned and changed to better protect against damage from rubbing and slight impact. That's good, we didn't test that, but time will tell if they hold up. Once again the rims are black, something we're not particularly keen on since they show scratches and scrapes so plainly. The best recommendation we can make is for you to use Motion Pro T6 tire irons to change your tires. They're made out of hardened aluminum and won't scratch the rims as bad as steel tire irons will. Or just take your wheels to your dealer and get him to change your tires on a machine. Wuss.

What else can we say? Nothing ever radically changes on KTMs any more, so riding this bike felt exactly the same as all the other KTMs we've ridden lately, which is good. If you're used to your old KTM, you know just where everything is on this bike. The power will feel a little different; a little softer than the 450, like we said. But there's a good chance that lack of "hit" will keep you out of trouble on this bike.

We've always been big fans of the 400, since KTM came out with the RFS engine. Once broken in and set up to your particular requirements, you should be able to race this bike and finish better than you ever have before, especially if you're upgrading from an '07 or earlier. And you're not going to miss that extra 50cc, trust us. If Mike Lafferty doesn't need it, why would you? **↑**



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Competition Dirt Riders (CDR) hosted their thirty-sixth annual Beehive enduro on August twenty-fourth in Mauricetown, NJ. The talk around sign-up was about dust, trail conditions and bike set up. The area received very little rain leading up to the enduro, leaving very dusty conditions. Beehive enduro would be considered a "sand run" within the East Coast Enduro Association, but the soil in Mauricetown is more dirt than sand. Bike setup falls somewhere between soft for the rocks and stiff for the sand. The biggest concerns I heard were about air filters and keeping them from clogging and potentially causing bike failure.

I am not a big fan of riding in the mud, but I'll take mud over dust. Riding in the dust makes it very difficult to ride hard when you can't see what's in front of you. Along with dust the temperatures and humidity were on the rise. Leaving the starting line, riders knew it was going to be a hot, dusty day.

Beehive starts off with a ten mile road ride to get riders to the woods and the first section. The first section would be four and a half miles of single track. The first few tenths of the section were dusty, as each minute of four riders were still tightly packed together. Fortunately there was a breeze blowing, which helped cut down on the dust. Even with the breeze it made it tough to close in and pass slower riders.

The first loop finished with a 5.5 mile section. The first two pieces were both fast, flowing single track. Other than the dust, the biggest challenge was the cornering. Riders would drive into corners not knowing if the berm was going to hold or if it was the equivalent of silt.

The second loop started off with a six mile piece. This would be the longest section of the day. As the afternoon went on the wind died down and the trail was becoming dustier. Catching and passing riders

was getting tougher, as the dust was hanging in the trail.

Following this first section was a long trail ride with free time leading into a reset. Leaving the reset, the first possible was only three tenths in. A few riders went in hot and tried sneaking up to the first possible. Most riders left the reset thinking the check would be at the first possible. The check ended up being at the third possible, and nine tenths into the trail. With a speed average of eighteen most riders hit the check within their minute.

The section was only three miles long with a speed change to 24 half a mile into the section. With riders hitting the check-in later in their minutes, and a speed change, many riders just missed the flip on the check-out. Many of the veteran enduro riders I spoke with after the event were the ones sneaking into the section early. They were able to ride possible and hit the check-in only a few seconds into their minutes and make the flip on the out. For many riders this section, and hitting or missing the flip, would determine their finishing position.

From there it was back to the second gas. The last section was four and a half miles of very fast open trail and firecuts. This piece would also be very dusty. I had a few scary moments

blowing through turns I never saw, but the scariest moment was when I thought I was going to hit another rider. The dust was thick and hanging in the air. I had put the bike down twice already in the section after blowing turns. I was riding hard to try to make up some of the time I lost while on the ground. I had found my rhythm and was riding hard. I came around a corner and through the dust I saw another rider standing by his bike. I assumed he was down in the

Everybody loves crossing the rivers at Moonshine. (Glenn Hershey photo)



Jack Lafferty Jr. finished second at Beehive, and took the overall win at Moonshine, padding out his points lead. (File photo by Todd Topham)



trail and getting remounted. I got on the brakes hard but there was no way I was going to stop in time. Thankfully the rider was off the trail and I was able to get past him. If he was in the trail it would have been ugly for both of us. After that it was a more cautious ride to the check-out.

One thing I didn't see or hear about this year was yellow jackets. Typically, somewhere along the course riders kick up a nest of yellow jackets and you hear the stories of riders being stung. Not this year.

The members of CDR really did a great job putting their enduro together. Those who missed it really missed a quality event. I know I have said it before, but thanks to all the members of CDR for working really hard to put the event together.

Andrew Tsakanikas beat Jack Lafferty, Jr. on e-points and took the overall win, dropping a ten. Jeff Pasqua dropped thirteen points and was the top A rider. Keith Johnson was the fastest B rider with an impressive score of eighteen. High Point C went to David Henninger with a score of thirty-one.

VFTR Moonshine Enduro

Brandonville, PA 9/14

Valley Forge Trail Riders (VFTR) hosted Moonshine enduro on September 14 in Brandonville, PA. I have been coming to Moonshine for the last five years for an annual butt kicking. I have always struggled in their terrain and this year would be no different.

Over the past five years Moonshine has not been kind to me. Blew a clutch one year, had a season-ending knee injury one year, broke the seat off my bike one year, you get the picture. Despite all my problems I have always finished. Why do I keep coming back? The club puts on a good tough enduro, and as much as I may complain, the accomplishment of just finishing their enduro always wins out in the end.



Ken Law on one of the Moonshine's smoother trails.
(Glenn Hershey photo)

Leading up to the event, the club was promising a more rider-friendly enduro this year. New trail had been laid out and instead of sending riders straight through the rock gardens they laid it out around them. With their terrain, we all knew this would be impossible, but we wanted to believe it. The mantra was, get through the first two sections and the trail eased up after that. There would be seven points-taking sections and I can assure you it didn't get easier after the first two sections. The club put their foot down on the riders and didn't let up for sixty miles.

The enduro started on a grass track and a small piece of woods before a reset and road ride to the first piece. This is a great way to start an enduro, as it allows riders to get warm and loosen up before heading into the rocks.

VFTR laid out a challenging course and did try to make the course a little more rider friendly. Yes, we still rode through some big rock gardens, but the sections of rocks were shorter than in the past. The trails flowed and were well thought out. The club used a check-in/check-out system, which is always a welcome sight. The sections ranged from three to six-plus miles, long enough to separate the riders but not too long as to cause riders to miss all the time at the resets.

The first section of the day was nearly five and a half miles of bony, technical trail. Following the section



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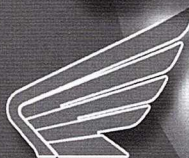
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was a welcome reset and a short road ride, and another reset at the gas available.

The next two sections were short, three-plus mile pieces, but equally as challenging as the first piece. I was pleased when I started to recognize some of the trail and knew one of my favorite parts of Moonshine

was just ahead. The trail is pretty rocky and technical, but there is a great payoff halfway through the section. You run through house-size boulders with an overhang that you ride under. This is also one of the best spectator areas in the ECEA. The locals and support crews line the trail, cheering you on as you ride

through, giving you the extra boost you need to get through this very technical little piece of trail.

The last section of the morning loop brought riders back into the camping area using the woods trail and grass track the event starts on. The section was four miles of fun, fast-flowing woods and an even faster

Beehive Enduro		A Vet		4. Jacek Malecki		25 KTM		2. Matthew Pratola		28 Kaw		1. John Kraft		33 KTM	
Class Results		1. Jeffrey Pasqua		13 Yam		5. Kyle Fontanazza		28 KTM		31 Kaw		2. Michael Deacosta		42 Atk	
Grand Champion		2. Michael Collins Jr		13 KTM		B 250		1. Jr, Steve Mason		31 KTM		3. Fredrick Smith		49 Hon	
Andrew Tsakanikas 10 Hon		3. Jamie Wright		13 KTM		18 Hon		5. Brad Rawlins		31 KTM		4. Scott Corsello		49 Kaw	
High Point A		4. Troy Mcnorniee		15 Yam		2. Michael Trauch		20 KTM		B Four-Stroke Heavy		5. Bryan Klair		49 Hon	
Jeffrey Pasqua 13 Yam		5. Ed Hutchinson		17 KTM		3. Greg Sawka		24 KTM		1. Eric Hahn		C Four-Stroke			
High Point B		A Senior		1. Pat Emmons		15 KTM		26 Hon		2. Sean Okeefe		21 KTM		1. Steve Register Jr	
Keith Johnson 18 Hus		2. Tim Mauro		16 Suz		5. Jeremy Lockard		27 KTM		3. Kevin Fontanazza		24 Yam		2. John Gallagher	
High Point C		3. Steve Larkin		16 KTM		B Heavy		1. Keith Stuart Jr.		4. Rick Stoltzfuz		27 KTM		3. Will Lane	
David Henninger 31 Yam		4. Jeff Kirchner		17 KTM		1. Thad Gilder		24 KTM		5. Dale Marks		27 Yam		4. Richard Trimble	
AA		5. Tom Gafgen		18 Yam		3. Anthony Lachette		26 KTM		C 200		5. Barry Ziegler		62 Hus	
1. Andrew Tsakanikas		10 Hon		A Super Senior		4. David Blodgett		28 KTM		1. Joseph Duble		31 Hon		Masters	
2. Jack Lafferty Jr		10 KTM		1. Lou Green		5. Jason Serafin		28 Gas		2. Craig Lifer		42 KTM		1. Scott Wolfersberger	
3. Dan Stoppi Jr		11 KTM		A Four Stroke Light		B Veteran		1. John Lalanas		3. Sean McKinney		59 KTM		2. Jack Lafferty Sr	
4. Dane Schoeneberg		12 Suz		2. Clifford Tenney		19 Hon		22 KTM		4. Lars Tuuesson		59 KTM		3. Charles Stapleford	
5. Chase Compton		13 KTM		3. Wayne Fontanazza		21 Yam		23 Yam		C 250		31 Yam		4. Rocco Spano	
A 200		1. James Shea Jr		13 KTM		2. Joe Vento		24 Hon		1. David Henninger		31 Hus		5. George Clickner	
2. Christopher Curlett		14 KTM		2. Daniel Compton		3. Michael Faulkner		25 Yam		2. Drew Uth		33 Kaw		Golden Masters	
3. Ron Decaro		17 KTM		A Four Stroke Heavy		4. Ralph Keen		20 KTM		3. Paul Fitzpatrick		44 KTM		1. Joe Galie	
4. Kyle Adams		17 KTM		1. Doug Allen II		5. David Meeks		20 Yam		4. Adam Mancewicz		48 Hon		2. Robert Hoover	
5. Ed Hamilton		18 KTM		2. Michael Beeler		B Senior		21 KTM		5. Harry Newcomer		C Heavy		3. Paul Krummel Sr	
A 250		1. Michael Hickman		16 Yam		1. Bart Hennaut		20 KTM		1. Jeff Marcucci		31 KTM		Women	
2. Glenn Cordova		17 KTM		4. Cliff Jones		2. Nick Sotiropoulos		20 Yam		2. Sam Pond		56		1. Merle Compton	
3. Chuck Sullivan		17 KTM		5. Bill Gilbert		3. Anthony Giordano		21 KTM		3. Dan Duzenski		63 KTM		2. Courtney Compton	
4. Michael Melniczuk		18 KTM		A Four Stroke Heavy		4. Arthur Downs		21 KTM		4. Ty Gore		68 KTM		3. Dianne Fitzgerald	
5. P.J. Cossman		19 KTM		1. Mark Schleeweis		5. Paul Chamings		22 KTM		5. Scott Sutton		75 KTM		4. Patricia Blair	
A Heavy		1. Jay Dean		14 KTM		B Super Senior		21 KTM		C Veteran		53 KTM		5. Erin Gerber	
2. Tony Hodgson		18 KTM		2. Kevin Sooy		1. William Rymon		24 KTM		1. Jeff Fitzpatrick		65 KTM		Dual Sport	
3. Todd Lockard		21 KTM		3. Phillip Wiegard		2. Gregory Grzybowski		25 KTM		2. Michael Jaep		66 Yam		1. Wayne Fields	
4. Mike Kopie		21 KTM		4. Dave Glenn		3. Brian Schoeneberg		25 Yam		3. Ryan Morrison		69 Kaw		Vintage	
5. John Walaszek		22 KTM		5. Joseph Dickinson		4. Peter Quigley		27 Hon		4. Damien Janocha		87		1. Chris Cummings	
				B 200		5. Bill Santora		B Four-Stroke Light		5. Michael Janocha		C Senior		2. Michael Newcomer	
				1. Christop Kendig		1. Keith Johnson		18 Hus						141 Hus	
				2. John Castaldi											
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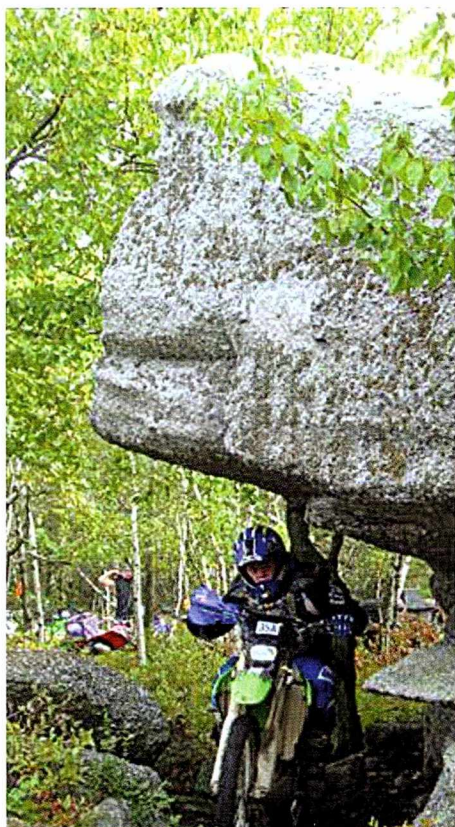
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The infamous hanging ledge at Moonshine. (GH)

grass track.

After the gas there was a five mile road ride to the start of the second loop. Thinking the toughest was behind me, I let my focus slip a little. The first section of the second loop was the longest section of the day at six-plus miles. The piece also offered some very technical rocks and off camber. Ultimately this section would be one of the toughest of the day. The club put a nice big reset after the piece to allow riders to cool down and catch their breath.

The next piece was another short three mile section, but again, the trail wasn't getting any easier. The humidity was also starting to play a role. At the reset you could see riders were starting to fight leg cramps, fading, and going into survival mode. What kept most of them going was the knowledge that only one section remained.

The last points-taking section was five miles long. The first three miles of the piece was some of the nicest flowing single track you could ride. Despite being tired and sore from bouncing through many miles of rocks, I felt re-energized and really found a great rhythm. Those first three miles clicked by in what seemed like a blink of an eye. The last two miles put riders back into bony, technical trail.

I have ridden Moonshine five times and finished all five times, but Moonshine has always gotten the better of me. This year was no different, but I will be back next year. Valley Forge Trail Riders put on a good, old-fashioned tough enduro. They don't do anything sneaky with time keeping. They don't need to. They let their trail separate the men from the boys. See you next year.

Jack Lafferty, Jr. and Mike Sigety both dropped twenty-fives, with Jack taking the overall on e-points. A honors went to Jeff Pasqua after carding a twenty-seven. Derek Gaunt was the fastest B rider with a score of thirty-nine. Mark Ott had a solid ride, dropping 59 and earning High Point C. ⬆

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YAMAHA WR250R

Yamaha's first fuel-injected dual sport is a woods cruiser

Okay, we had to take a step back and look at this bike carefully before we tested it. This is not the kind of bike you're going to ride in the average bike-killing NETRA turkey run, or definitely not in an enduro. The WR250R is not made for that kind of riding.

We'd love to leave it at that, but we're going to add "At least it's not made for it right out of the box." Yes, you could modify the street-legal WR250R if you wanted to make it more of a dirt bike. But doing so would without a doubt void any kind of warranty you had from the dealer, and it would also be in violation of any EPA/DOT rules if you then rode it on the street. Also, you'd be up against a lot of trouble, as in trying to find someone who made an accessory silencer for it, dealing with a suspension system that was only designed to deliver 10.6 inches of travel, replacing the steel gas tank with something less dent-able that still would fit, and on and on.

Why bother? Excellent question. We wouldn't recommend modifying this bike, but we know a few guys out there are going to, and the reason they're going to do it is that the WR250R is a lot of fun to ride, and it works very well when you keep it within its design limits.

Looks Aren't Everything

When you first look at the WR250R, you're going to want to believe that it's based on the WR250F off road bike. Well, it is, if you only consider that they're both blue and white.

Wait. Before we continue, learn to make the distinction between all these WRs. The WR250R is this dual sport bike that we're testing. The WR250F is the old reliable Yamaha 250 enduro bike we've been riding all these years. There's one more new WR, the WR250X, which is basically the "R" model (street legal) with 17-inch wheels front and rear and a Supermotard look.

The WR250R looks a lot like the WR250F, but the "R" model uses a whole new engine and a whole new frame. The engine is a DOHC 250cc mill with a pair of titanium intake valves and a pair of steel exhaust valves. The piston runs in a plated cylinder. It's a wet sump engine, meaning there's no oil in the frame, and the frame rails actually wrap around the sump to keep the overall engine height down. There's a six speed transmission and it's electric-start only—no way to even put a kickstarter on this one. The WR250R is also the first Yamaha "dirt bike" to use a direct ignition system, where the coil is part of the spark plug cap.

On top of all that, also new is a fuel injection system. You won't find a gas tank petcock on this bike, neither will you find a choke knob. Turn on the key, listen to the buzz of the fuel pump, hit the starter button and it starts. Whether it's cold or hot is all taken into consideration by the FI system, which means you can start it up cold, put it in gear and drive off without hardly a hiccup from the engine. That's right, no more standing there for a few minutes waiting for it to warm up.



The WR250R in its element: exploring the forgotten dirt roads.

We're hoping this FI system winds up on the "F" model real soon.

There's a lot going on in the chassis, as well. The frame is a collection of cast and forged aluminum sections and steel down tubes. The swingarm is built up of pieces that are also cast aluminum and forged aluminum. The forks and shock are limited to 10.6 inches, as we already said, but both suspension units feature adjustable compression and rebound damping. How about that? You know, the trouble with the older "dual purpose" bikes was that they didn't have much travel and weren't at all adjustable, so you couldn't ever hope to make the suspension work better without spending a lot of money on aftermarket components. Here the new WR250R is admittedly short-legged, but the suspension components are top notch

and you can adjust them to actually make the bike work the best it can.

Heavy stuff: The steel tank. If you fall on a plastic tank, you scratch it. If you fall on a steel tank, you dent it. When you dent it, it holds less fuel, and at 2.0 gallons this bike can't stand to hold much less fuel. Also, the muffler. We love the muffler—it chokes the exhaust noise down to a near-whisper. But, we're going to assume it's responsible for a lot of the WR250R's claimed 276 pound dry weight. It would be nice if it were lighter, but it doesn't need to be any louder. That's not what this bike is all about.

Odd stuff: Though there are radiator shrouds on both sides, there's only one radiator, on the right side. The left side holds a clump of electronic equipment and what appears to be emissions control components. Also, the front and rear fenders are small, real WR or YZ stuff, but the taillight and license plate holder is a marvel of modern engineering. If this is what it takes to be legal, we now know why there aren't any smaller street legal Yamahas. Anything smaller and the bottom of the sub-fender would drag on the ground.

What About Riding It?

After checking all this stuff out, we got on it and rode it. No tight, gnarly trails, no skyshot jumps or anything. We used it to prow around cart roads and easy powerlines near the Trail Rider offices. You know what we found? Well, we found that people don't even look up from what they're doing in the yard when you ride by on this bike. It makes very little noise when you're just cruising along, which is good for the people in their yards and very comfortable for you.

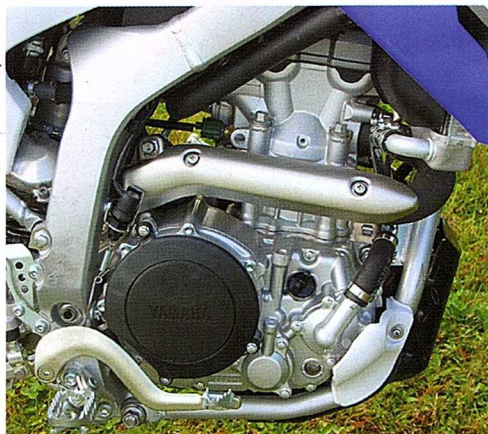
We did find, though, that the "R" has a real howl at upper RPMs, and it will rev out seemingly past the 10,000 rpm horsepower peak. At those levels the WR250R is mighty snappy, and it no longer feels like a novice-only bike. It feels like something an ex-racer



like yourself would be comfortable on, for spirited dual sporting.

Again, though, it's not going to be a racer without a ton of work. The suspension is set up and sprung very softly. If you're approaching or exceeding 200 pounds you are stressing the suspension a bit already, and add on some bumpy ruts and maybe a rock or two, and it's easy to bottom-out both the shock and forks. Yes, you can adjust them to make them suit you better, but remember you're working with less than 11 inches of travel here, give it a break.

The WR has good power right off the bottom, but



The WR250R has a whole new engine, including a Direct Ignition system and electronic fuel injection.

our bike was barely broken-in—only 275 miles on it—so it will probably get better once it loosens up a little. The fuel injection has that characteristic FI feel that we're starting to recognize from other FI bikes we've ridden. They all seem crisp, and the WR250R is no different. The fuel mixture feels evenly lean from top to bottom, and also there are no "fat spots" or hitches in the fuel delivery anywhere from low revs to peak revs. The FI makes a huge difference in smoothness over a carburetor.

What you get is steady power, all the way up. We could still stall the bike pretty easily if we were sloppy with our clutch action from stopped, but basically this bike feels great when you feed the fuel to it. The upper midrange hits pretty hard, and you can really spin the back wheel when you get the revs up near the limit and delay your shifting. Ride it like this and the WR250R feels like a race bike, but again, this isn't the way the bike was meant to be ridden, so don't.

You probably won't want to ride it like that because of the tires. The WR250R is shod with a pair of Bridgestone Trail Wing DOT-approved tires, and they feel as though they're designed more for lasting a long time on the road rather than getting a grip on snotty rocks. You'll improve this bike immensely by slipping on a more aggressive pair of tires, and if you do some research you can even find good DOT-approved tires out there. The Dunlop 908 front tire would be a good choice. Pair that with a DOT-approved trials tire...hmmm, the possibilities are endless.

But you know, we didn't think about it too hard. We rode this bike the way it was designed to be ridden. We plunked ourselves down on the seat, thumbed it to life and cruised the local dirt roads, stopping to explore along the way. We actually had fun, enjoyed the bike, and learned something about the more wooded corners of the neighborhood. And isn't that what it's really all about? Don't race it. Just ride it and enjoy the scenery, and this Yamaha will make you quite happy. ⬆

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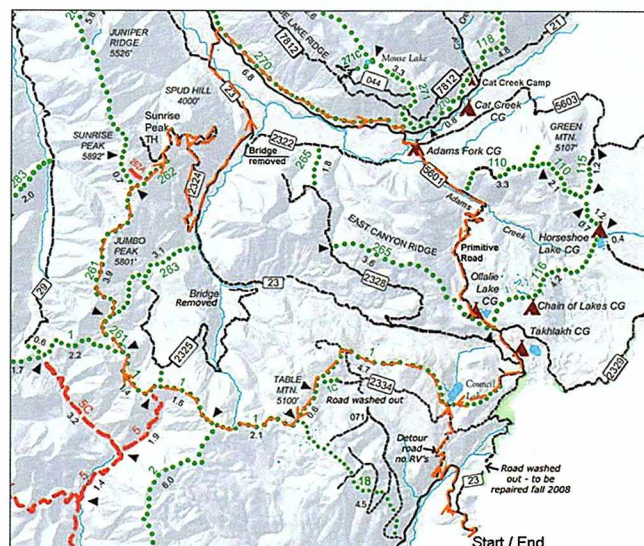
Worthy of a Bucket List!

Story and Photos By David Vincent Schelake

Gifford Pinchot National Forest

About a year and a half ago, I was laid up paralyzed in a hospital bed, making out a list of things I would like to do when I recovered. I had the misfortune to come down with a rare neurological disease that had me in the hospital for two months, and I was looking at nine months of physical rehab when I got out. Since I had quite a while to make my list, as you can imagine it grew to include many things, including a few rides I had always wanted to do. Well, this summer I was able to mark one ride off that list: The Juniper Ridge Trail in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Even though I had ridden in the GP many times before, I had never made it to the Juniper Ridge Trail. I had seen many photos from that ride over the years, and had tried to hit it a few times before, but bad luck and bad weather had always kept me away. This time everything came together, and my friend Ken and I had an absolute epic ride. Our ride started on the Southeast end of the National Forest, where we parked a few miles north of Trout Lake. Conditions were perfect. It had rained hard two days before, and today's forecast was sunny, 80 degrees with a slight wind. Perfect

weather for our backcountry ride. We pulled out our dual sports and headed up Hwy 23 for a few miles of nice paved twistys. It was a great little warm up for the killer single track that lay ahead. With the road washed out on Hwy 23, we got lost for a little while trying to find our way up to Council Lake via the alternate route, and the start of the Boundary Trail. Once at Council Lake, the fun really begins. A rocky dirt road leads up from the lake for a mile or so then quickly turns to single track. While on this section of the Boundary Trail (trail #1) I didn't shoot too many pics. I was pumped to ride and was really looking forward to hitting the high elevation vistas. Also, you need to keep your eye on the trail, as one little mistake and you will be walking out, as your bike will be 300 yards

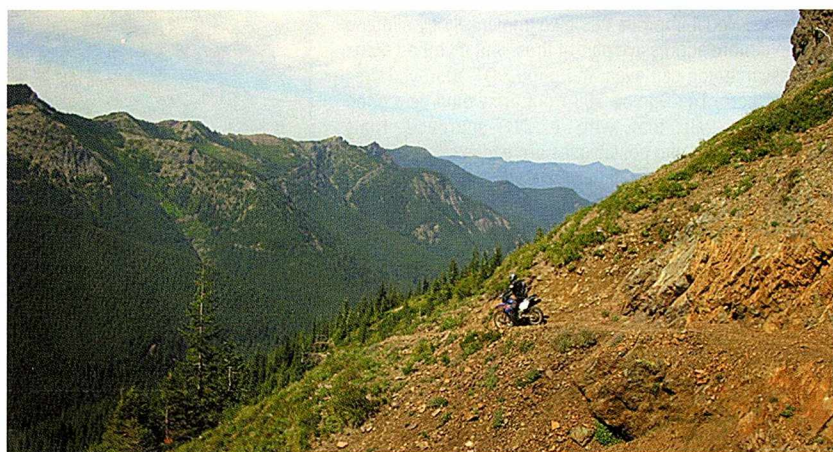
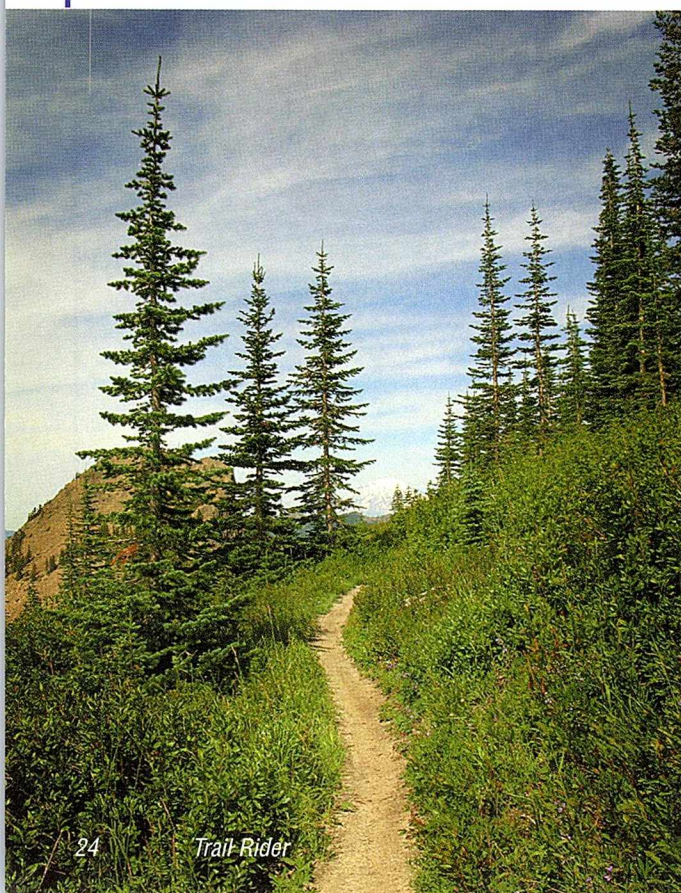


David's Juniper Ridge Trail loop. The GP has many miles of trails. Find the maps at <http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/recreation/trailbikes/maps.shtml>.

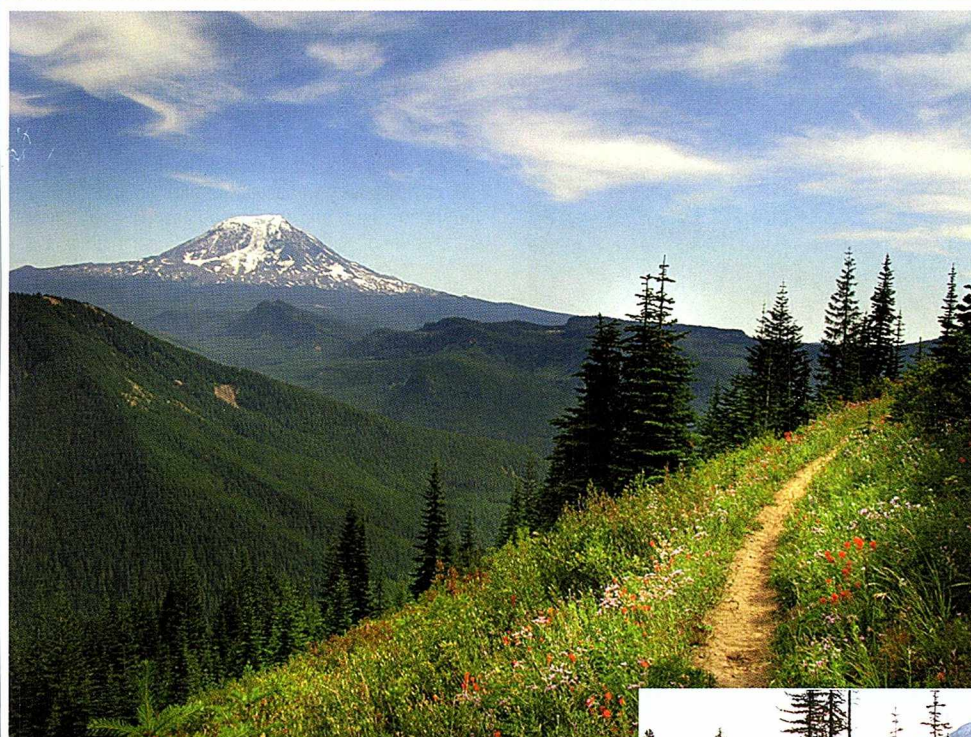
down a very steep cliff. To those who have never ridden in the GP, the trails here can get pretty sketchy. Tight single track, big drop-offs after blind corners, 180 degree switchbacks on steep, open rocky hillsides and no easy way out if something goes wrong. If you're afraid of heights, I don't recommend you ride these trails. From the Boundary Trail, we headed north on the Juniper Ridge Trail (trail #261)

towards Sunrise Peak. Once you start on the Juniper Ridge Trail you are welcomed by some tough but fun switchbacks that just keep coming, one after another. Fun, but a bit tricky at times, and well worth the effort as you are rewarded by some of the best single track and scenery in the country. Once on the top of the ridge we decided it was time for lunch and a much-needed rest, as we had been riding for about four hours without a break. We sat and ate with about the best view you could imagine. Everywhere we looked it was just awe-inspiring. I had seen many photos of this

Left: Juniper Ridge looking north to Mt Rainer. Below: Juniper Ridge Trail around the west side of Jumbo Peak. Just one of many sketchy spots we were to hit this day. The trail can get about a foot wide in spots, with near-vertical drops for hundreds of feet.



ROADER



Valley Trail (trail #270). After so much single track, it was a nice change of pace to hit a wide, fast trail. Valley Trail is one of the few trails in the GP open to quads. With the two trackers being the only life-threatening danger lurking around every corner, we stepped it up a bit and had some fun.

By the time we hit the FS 5601, a primitive dirt road, we were feeling a little tired and welcomed the nice wide road. We had a blast actually. If you're into old dirt roads that you can really rip on, you gotta check this one out. The FS 5601 dropped us out at Ollalie Lake where we stopped and took a little break before making our final run to the truck. We had two choices. One little section of trail remained. We could loop around taking the gravel roads, or take a one mile trail section that would put us right back at Council Lake, finishing the loop and leaving a nice, easy 12 miles of fun roads to the truck. We (of course) decided on the trail. Not the best choice, we soon came to find out. After 60-something miles of great riding we found the little one mile of trail hadn't been cleared or kept up for what seemed to be a few years. As we headed down steep, rutted-out switchbacks, we hoped we were on the right trail and wouldn't have to try to backtrack out. This last little section did me in, and by

the time we dropped out at Council Lake I was wiped out. Our ride back to the truck was a great cool down. We were able to just cruise the twisty road and take in the scenery. A few miles from the truck Ken hit reserve but he was able to make it with a few ounces of fuel to spare. What an epic day. No crashes or mechanical problems. Great weather, a great riding partner, and 70-plus miles of some of the best riding in the country. I can't wait to head back. Now, what's next on that list?

David Vincent Schelake
www.westlinnstudios.com

About the author: This is David's first article. As a professional photographer, David Schelake likes to stay behind the lens and usually lets someone else do the writing. An advertising photographer for 15 years, David has worked on ad campaigns all around the country, and makes his home in the Portland, Oregon area.

The Forest Service has a wealth of information on trail riding opportunities in the Gifford Pinchot NF on the GP website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/recreation/trailbikes/trails.shtml> ↑



My trusty steed. Most dual sport bikes are a bit much for the tight single track of the GP, but my old Husky worked flawlessly.



Only a half hour from the truck and I already got us lost. Here is Ken checking out the view while I consult the map. Above: This is why I love to ride here. Unbelievable single track with epic views all around. This is trail 262 off the Juniper ridge trail.

ridge over the years, but nothing was like seeing it for myself. Ken was a great sport as he waited for me many times while I was out running all over the place shooting pics like a little kid, those many months in the hospital all but forgotten. After lunch we headed around Jumbo Peak and over towards Sunrise. The rest of Juniper would have to wait 'til next time, as we didn't have enough fuel to make the full loop. So we headed down Sunrise Peak Trail (trail #262) to FS2324 and hit Hwy 23 over to the

Knobby Chunks

News and Comment from MACE

Reiter Trails - DNR Oversight

The following press release was received from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It outlines recent progress made with state and volunteer efforts to help prevent siltation at Deer Creek. Speaking personally, as a crabby old magazine hack, the tone of this release is a bit disturbing as it seems to place the blame for siltation solely on the off road users. No mention is made of the nearly unprecedented flooding in the area last winter which some of us non-degreed hicks might think would have been a contributing factor. We have enjoyed Reiter with little oversight for decades and it is quite true that the DNR can shut it down at their whim (like the P-5000 area). The critical factor in keeping Reiter open to us is to work with DNR to make sure our interests are not overwhelmed by other influences. The DNR is making an effort to work with us

NMA Events for November '08

Nov 2 (EP) Black Bear Enduro Cascade Family MC, Tahuya. Dean Dorsett, 253-845-7463.

Nov 2 Fall Hare Scrambles Eastern Washington Dirt Riders Assoc, Horn Rapids ORV Park, Richland, Don Grazzini, 509-967-2404 after 6pm

Nov 8-9 Euro GP The Over The Bars Gang, Eddieville. Scott Doubravsky, 509-773-4853, merland@gorge.net.



We got your volunteer effort... Stumpjumper MC trail crew working on hardening a trail.

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

As you may know, Reiter Foothills in eastern Snohomish County has long been a popular recreation area. The 10,000-acre area, 20 miles east of Everett, attracts off-road enthusiasts, campers, hikers, mountain bikers, and hunters. The southern portion, in particular, has become increasingly popular over the years for ORV, motorcycle, and 4x4 use.

Reiter is so popular that some areas have become overused, and some streams and streambanks have experienced environmental damage from off-trail riding and sheer numbers of users. This became especially obvious this year because of the combination of late spring runoff and increased seasonal use. The high amount of sediment in some of Reiter's streams has affected water quality and stream habitat for fish and other aquatic species. Areas of particular concern include a water crossing along the Wall Trail at Deer Creek.

To address the problems in Reiter, DNR last year put together an advisory committee made up of recreation users and local citizens. The committee has been working collaboratively using scientific data to guide their work to design what is right for the land and what is right for users in this area.

By March 2009, the advisory committee will make recommendations to DNR, which will acquire the necessary funding to restore the site, build facilities, and work with volunteers to bring Reiter Foothills up to date as a safe, sustainable recreation site in a

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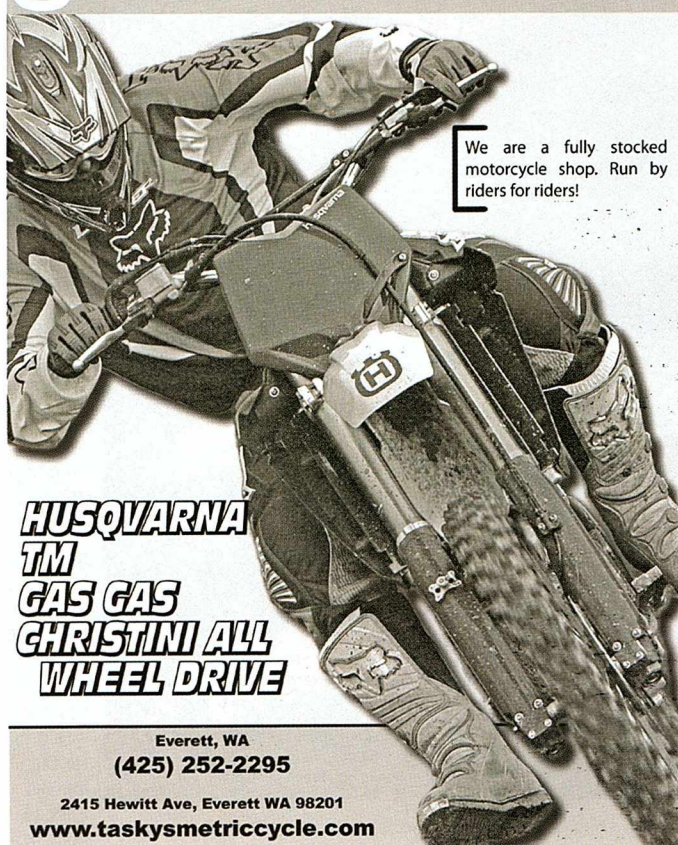
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Meanwhile, the Departments of Ecology and Fish and Wildlife and the Tulalip Tribes share our concern. Together, we have jointly identified some interim work for the Deer Creek crossing. These interim measures will help correct the problems until the advisory group can complete its final recommendations and DNR determines the best course of action for the long term.

DNR staff appreciate that the majority of people who enjoy off-road motorized sports on state managed lands want to continue to ride in popular areas such as Reiter. We are asking you to support interim short-term solutions as we work with the public and user groups to develop a long-term plan for recreation in Reiter. We have set up a number of volunteer work parties to:

- Protect streams from sediment.
- Protect water quality.
- Protect wetlands and fish habitat.
- Clean up and prevent litter.

The first of the work parties was August 23. DNR and a number of ORV volunteers began work to mitigate impacts to water at the trail crossing along Deer Creek. Work at this site will continue over the next several weeks. The next scheduled work party is a general Reiter Trail cleanup set for October 12, sponsored by Reiter Trail Watch. We may add other work parties throughout the year.

DNR Northwest Region, 919 N Township St., Sedro Woolley, WA 98284-9384. Telephone (360) 856-3500, www.dnr.wa.gov.

but they need our help to make good choices.

Future Reiter Foothills Committee Meeting Dates are: December 3, January 28, February 18, and March 18. Let the DNR know we are here in numbers and are willing to be involved. Take the survey linked on the DNR site (the page is poorly designed – click the word “survey” in the second paragraph to go to a survey-monkey site). Don’t be inflammatory in your comments but be sure to say how important Reiter Trails are to you.

http://www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Events/Pages/amp_rec_reiter_foothills_recreation_survey.aspx.



Welcome to the NMA

Based in Washington state and founded in 1973, the Northwest Motorcycle Association has been dedicated to the preservation of off-road motorcycling for over thirty years. The NMA specializes in educating riders on issues affecting their riding opportunities and with a full event schedule sponsoring enduros, hare scrambles and poker runs. To learn more about the NMA, visit the web site at www.nmaoffroad.org, or contact them at:

Northwest Motorcycle Association
12016 231st Ave E, Bonney Lake, WA 98391
360-897-9588

Direct e-mail contact:

nma@nmaoffroad.org	General questions
membership@nmaoffroad.org	Membership/changes
competition@nmaoffroad.org	Competition questions
pokerruns@nmaoffroad.org	Poker run series questions
volunteer@nmaoffroad.org	Volunteering and trail work
webmaster@nmaoffroad.org	Web site questions

Special lovin' at Reiter Trails – training ground for champions. Photo by Trav.

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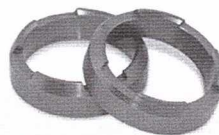
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FIREWORKS IN VEGAS

Once again, you never know what's going to happen at Endurocross

The Fourth of July is often associated with hot weather, good times, and watching sparks fly. The promoters of the Endurocross series chose this weekend to begin the '08 Endurocross series and they managed to include all three of the regular Independence Day ingredients.

For one, finding hot weather in Las Vegas is not a problem. While Vegas doesn't have the same kind of "hot" found in other parts of the country, 110 degrees is still hot. Thank goodness the Orleans Arena is air-conditioned. Isn't it great that they have found a way for off-road racers to become "wussified" like many other sports? The truth is, as intense as Endurocross is, I'm not sure how smart it would be to attempt it in 110-degree heat.

Good times? If you haven't been to an Endurocross, find one close to you and check it out. If the Barnum and Bailey Circus was the Greatest Show on Earth, Endurocross is the Greatest Show on Two Wheels. There is never a dull moment from the start of practice to the final checkered flag of the night. These events are a spectators' paradise and you will find it impossible to not stand up and yell.

From a riders' standpoint, how awesome is it to be racing inside an arena in front of thousands of fans? That isn't something that you get when riding from checkpoint to checkpoint. There are amateur classes available and that keeps with the off-road theme of it being a sport for everyone. Got a bike? Give it a try. Want to practice? Stand in your living room, jump as high as you can, and every third time lift the couch.

The flying of the sparks? While the '07 Vegas Endurocross is still being talked about, the '08 kick-off was just as intense. There was as much bar banging, block passing, crashing, pushing and shoving, posi-

tion changing, ghost riding (I thought that was illegal now) and "Wally Palmering" as you can have crammed into one night. If the guy you were focused on wasn't entertaining enough, just turn your head 10 degrees and watch the show.

Support Classes: How It All Works

For 2008 there are four "support classes:" Two-Stroke, Four-Stroke, Vet +35, and Trialscross. The Two-Stroke, Four-Stroke, and Vet classes are for motorcycles with more than a 55 inch wheelbase and they are not allowed to use trials tires. The Trialscross class is for bikes under 55 inches and trials tires are allowed. This class ends up being open to trials bikes, big wheel minis, and "hybrids" (although no hybrids were present in Vegas).

New this year is the absence of a points system for the support classes. With the ever-increasing expense of travel a major concern for many racers, no points will be kept. Instead, each of the six rounds will serve as a "regional qualifier," where the top two finishers in each of the four classes at each of the six events will qualify for a one race, winner-take-all event that will crown four amateur national champions. This race will take place at the series finale on November 22 in Las Vegas.

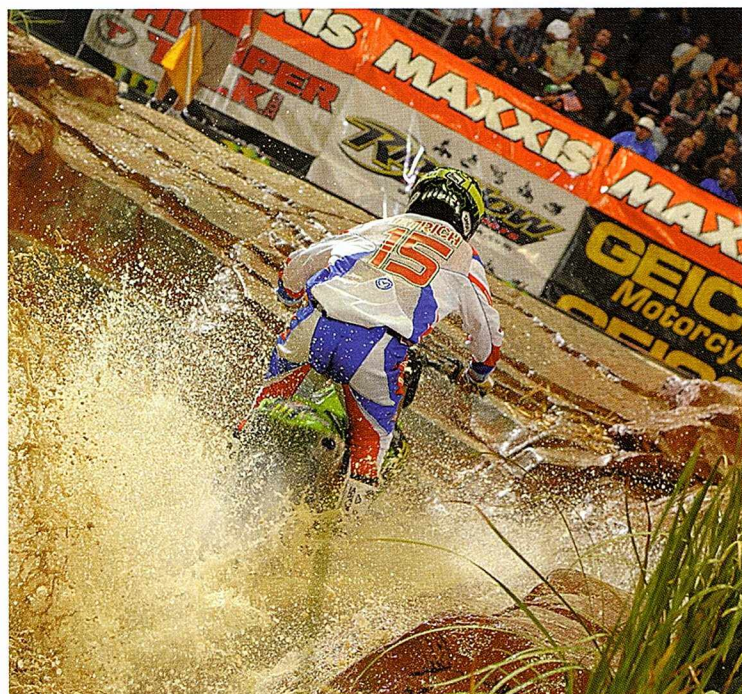
The event format for '08 is slightly different than last year. There is a track walk and riders meeting that starts at 9 a.m. Saturday and then the first rounds of practice begin at 10 a.m. This is usually the most entertaining part of the day as everyone is getting their first shot at the obstacles. Normally all of the advice that a racer has been given during the track walk by his "buddies" has been

thrown out the window and he has relegated himself to just trying to complete laps (or sometimes just one). It is amazing how simple something looks on foot but finds a way to become very difficult once on the bike.

There is a second round of practice in which lap times are kept and a rider's quickest lap determines his gate pick for the heat races. In Vegas there is a "jumbo-tron" that displays lap times fed by the transponder scoring system, so it wasn't uncommon to see riders looking up at it after a solid lap to see where they stood and then decide whether or not to hammer out a quicker lap, or at least attempt to.

From practice, you go straight into the heat races. Depending on which class you were in, either the top two or three riders would transfer to the class main event. If you didn't make it from there, you had one more chance in your class Last Chance Qualifier where usually the top two would make the main. If you didn't transfer from there, the rest of your day and evening would be spent as a spectator (which sometimes seems like a hell of a good trade).

The class main events are now part of the night program so if you happen to qualify, you get a few hours to prep your bike, worry about how silly you might look in front of five or six thousand people, and find your "happy place" so that you can perform at your best. Just making a class main event is a chore. Even more of a chore is being able to run at the front of the pack and eventually finding yourself on the podium. If you can do that, you get to line up with the other sup-



Taddy Blasuziak (left) came out swinging in Vegas and took the overall. Ricky Dietrich (above) tried to get up there, but instead finished a safe third. (Photos by Tony Scavo)

by Steve Leivan

VEGAS

port class podium finishers and a shot at some money in the Dash for Cash. The winner of that race takes home \$500 (\$300 for second and \$200 for third) and earns a position in the Expert Main event with the heroes of the sport.

Support Calsses: What Went On

As mentioned earlier, the support classes are very tough and all four are filled with well-known riders with long lists of accolades.

The Four-Stroke class was won by perhaps the smallest guy in the field, WORCS racer Jamie Lanza. Last year in Oklahoma Lanza (who might weigh in at 120 pounds) put himself into the main event, so it was obvious the kid has skills and he used those to take the class victory in Vegas. That wouldn't be his only victory of the night though, keep reading. Lanza led a Kawasaki sweep of the Four-Stroke class over another WORCS youngster Taylor Robert with Gary Sutherland in third.

Nick Brozovich took the Two-Stroke win on a Zip Ty Racing Suzuki. Brozovich is a tall and aggressive rider who really shined in the EX series in 2007 by finishing third overall. Earlier in the day Brozovich had won his heat race and posted some of the quickest times, so finding him at the front of the pack wasn't much of a surprise. Second went to Eric Rhoten on his Yamaha with Jacob "I rode more laps than anyone here" Argubright getting third.

The Vet main event saw Ty Davis in front from start to finish. Last year's number one and number two Vet riders in the series, Tod Sciacqua and Steve Leivan, both had trouble negotiating the rock sections at different times and that opened the door for local rider

Trent Sandoval who rode the most consistent race of all and took the runner-up position behind Davis. Sciacqua managed to finish third ahead of Leivan.

In the Trialscross class, Phil Smage took the win with Michael Wegner and Rory Sullivan going 2-3. Smage rode the entire series in '07 and made the Expert main in Denver and nearly did it the next week in Oklahoma. He was doing double duty this year by riding his Sherco and then jumping on a 125 KTM in the Expert class.

After all of the class mains were over, all of these podium finishers would get at least one more chance to race in the Dash for Cash later that night, with the winner getting a spot in the Expert main. Brozovich once again dialed in the start and put together a great ride to take home the \$500. Smage took second on his trials bike and that proved to be a very valuable position. Since Brozovich had already earned a spot in the Expert main by winning the first heat race, it appears that the Dash position went to Smage, who had to switch over to his KTM since no trials bikes are allowed in the main event. Whatever the scenario, Smage was in the main when the gate dropped.

Expert Heat Races

The first heat race was more than a little surprising. It wasn't so much that Nick Brozovich

Geoff Aaron put out a massive effort and pushed Blasuziak right to the finish, earning a second place finish. (Kinney Jones photo)



My Endurocross Experience

by Steve Leivan

I think Endurocross is cool. In '07 I rode all three rounds and finished on the podium each time in the Vet class, and I qualified for the night show in Denver. I've built a practice track at my house that is difficult, but not quite as intense as Vegas was. Hey, I've got to make it rideable enough that my buddies can ride, too.

Vegas is a long ways from Missouri. It is actually 1440 miles and last year my dad and I managed to do the drive in 22 and a half hours straight through. That was the second time we had done that and it was a smooth drive, but it is still a long way.

In January we were talking with a friend (Jay Williams) at the Missouri Hare Scrambles awards banquet and telling him how much fun Endurocross is to watch. He wanted to know when and where the next one was, and when we told him "Vegas," he said, "Let's fly out there."

So the obvious question was how to get my bike to the race. Well, Jay had that part covered, since he has a Cherokee Lance airplane. He thought that with some work we would be able to get my bike into the plane. On Mothers Day he flew down to Nevada, MO (about 30 minutes from my house), and we did a "practice load." With both wheels, both fenders, and the forks removed, the bike fit in perfectly. We were ready to go.

The Thursday before the race we met in Nevada again and got the bike loaded along with my gear bag and all of the extra stuff that I thought I would need – and it all fit! Jay, Dad, and I then headed out west, which was a pretty big deal for me. I have only flown twice. Once was leaving a race in a helicopter (not voluntarily) and the other time was going to the ISDE in New Zealand in 2006. This was going to be an experience.

Actually the flight didn't bother me that much. I was a little nervous the first time that we hit some turbulence, but I got more comfortable with it. We got to fly around over the Grand Canyon, which pretty much made the whole trip awesome – and we weren't even racing yet. Seven and a half hours after we left home, we were in Vegas.

Our friends from Arizona, the McWhorters, had driven up and had their motorhome positioned in the pits when we got there. My sister and her husband (Stephanie and Jarod) had flown in from Fort Worth for the race and we all met up in the pit area on Thursday afternoon. Jay's son flew in from California later that day and Jay picked him up.

As for as my races, they went all right. I had a good Vet heat race and finished second behind Ty Davis. In my Expert races, I couldn't get off the gate for crap and had to deal with all of the carnage that goes on in the back of the pack. I didn't qualify for the Expert program but I was in the night show with the Vet class. Unfortunately, I got another less than ideal start and got hung up in both rock sections on the first lap. After that, I rode pretty good and worked my way up to fourth. I missed out on the Dash and missed out on qualifying for the finale in Vegas.

The good news is that I have five more chances and I am already looking forward to the next one.

The flight home was super smooth and I am already thinking about where I can have Jay fly us next!



Trail Rider reporter Steve Leivan is covering the Endurocross as well as racing the series, so far with pretty good results among the amateurs.

took the victory, but more that Taddy didn't. After dazzling the crowd last year by out-dueling David Knight and dominating all kinds of extreme events since then, the expectations on Taddy are quite big. Also quite big was the guy that Taddy ended up battling for a transfer to the main event; Bobby Prochnau from Canada. The Canadian had shown great speed during hot laps and never backed down from Taddy, eventually taking second position and a spot in the main event with a pass in the rocks just before the white flag.

Heat two got off to an exciting start when Wally Palmer grabbed the holeshot on his Christini. Wally makes sure that everyone in attendance gets their money's worth when he is on the track, so all eyes were on him. Last year's runner-up in the series, Damon Huffman, methodically took over and led until the last lap (and nearly the last series of obstacles). There was a huge traffic jam on the rock mound and Huffman came to a complete stop while waiting for a line to open up. Huffman went for it and got held up long enough for Jamie Lanza to squeak by and steal the victory.

The final heat race saw established trials guys do their thing. Geoff Aaron and Colton Haaker got to the front immediately and pulled away from the pack. Both riders knew that they would be in the main event, so both were willing to keep from turning the race into something aggressive and risk taking each other down.

Semi-Finals

More Taddy drama was in store for the first semi-final. The rumor was that Taddy had broken something in his forks during his battle with Prochnau and between races the team switched them to a more



Destry Abbott muscles through the rocks. He ran a strong third for a while and finished in fourth. (Tony Scavo photo)

standard KTM fork rather than his "works" equipment. This probably had nothing to do with Taddy going down in the first turn, but it did help with the drama factor. You see, only the winner from the semi transfers to the main, but more important than that is that in order to make the Last Chance Qualifier, you have got to finish second through fifth. If you don't do that,

your night is over.

So with Geico guy Eric Rodgers taking the holeshot and Kyle Redmond in second, all eyes then switched to Taddy to see if he could get into the top five. Within two laps he had climbed to fourth but went for more and eventually ran down and passed Redmond for the lead. Then Taddy stumbled in the rocks and Redmond went back in front. Taddy then used a slightly questionable line exiting the water and landed alongside Redmond. Both riders raced for the rock corner and both got hung up, with Redmond blocking the way with his arm pushed against a log. Taddy was jammed in between two rocks and eventually shoved Redmond out of the way. During the fiasco, Ty Davis rode by to take the win and a spot in the main.

Semi two was rather calm compared to the first one, as WORCS points-leader Ricky Dietrich led from start to finish. Ryan Dudek and Homero Diaz of Mexico followed, but both were bound for the LCQ.

The closest finish of the evening was in semi number three. It started rather calmly for JCR Honda rider Kendall Norman, who grabbed the holeshot and checked out. Destry Abbott rode in second until doing a massive endo over a huge log entering the rock mound, and it appeared that Kyle Calderini would take over the spot until he too crashed in the rocks trying to pass Abbott. That opened the door for Phil Smage to take over the runner-up spot temporarily. Abbott didn't give up though, and got back into second with just one lap left.

Norman then had his first mistake of the race when he fell at the end of the rock corner. By the time he got his bike started, Abbott had just ridden by for the lead.

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In the rock mound, Norman was on the gas and pushed Abbott wide to re-take the lead with just one turn left. Abbott cut back underneath Norman crossing the last log and they both ended up going down. With the checkered flag virtually 15 feet from where the two riders were laying, the crowd was on their feet. They both got up at the same time and both four-strokes were still running. Running is just what Abbott did. As Norman jumped on his bike, Abbott ran next to his and launched his bike over the finish line as he rolled through the logs. All eyes were on the jumbotron to see who got the spot and it was Abbott. It sounded like some parts of the finish could have been somewhat controversial (ghost riding, do you have to be on your bike, etc.), so Norman was put into the main as well.

LCQ

Though Calderini took the holeshot in the Last Chance Qualifier, Taddy took over in the water and stayed at the front the rest of the way to earn his spot in the main event. Redmond kept him honest in second but never got a chance at revenge for the shove he got in the semi final. For those who made the LCQ but didn't win, there was one more race, and it was in the dark. The bikes were fitted with Baja Designs lights and the arena lights were turned off. Beta rider Keith Wineland jumped out front and led for a couple of laps before getting stuck in the rocks. Eric Rhoten took over and stayed there until the end to win the race and \$1000 from Baja Designs. Wally started out with a light but somewhere along the way it went out. Then it came back on. Then it fell off. None of that mattered to Wally though, as he continued to launch his way around the track and give everyone something to talk about.

Main Event

Compared to the rest of the evening, the main event wasn't quite as intense, but was still very entertaining. Huffman grabbed the holeshot with Aaron and Taddy close behind. Aaron showed his mastery of the treacherous rock turn and overtook Huffman on the opening lap. Taddy was next to take a shot at Huffman and made a pass going over the rock mound. Taddy immediately went after Aaron and was able to draw inside going across the tires and put himself into the lead at the start of lap two.

Abbott and Brozovich had moved around Huffman as well and were running third and fourth in the early stages of the eight-lap final. Things got interesting on the fourth lap when Taddy stumbled in the rock turn and Aaron was close enough to get another taste of the lead. Somewhere during the race, Aaron actually rode through that same turn without even taking a dab, making it very clear that he had that section dialed.

Taddy didn't follow for long and soon took over the front spot and held on to it until the checkered flag. Aaron was never far behind and if Taddy had made another mistake, the 10-time National Trials Champion may well have had his first Endurocross victory. As it turned out Aaron finished a well-deserved second place.

Dietrich rode a clean race and stayed out of trouble to finish third, getting by both Abbott and Brozovich when they had trouble on the rock mound in separate incidents. Brozovich ended his excellent day with a fourth place finish, getting past Haaker on the final lap when Haaker took his turn to get stuck in the rocks. Huffman would get by as well to round out the top five with Haaker finishing sixth.

All in all, it was an excellent weekend of racing and a great way to kick off the series. ▲

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*Ladies and gentlemen please
Would you bring your attention to me?
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An explosion of catastrophe*

*Like nothing you've ever seen before
Watch closely as I open this door
Your jaws will be on the floor
After this you'll be begging for more*

*Welcome to the show
Please come inside
Ladies and gentlemen*

These lyrics are from the Saliva song "Ladies and Gentlemen" and are a perfect fit for what is definitely a show. The "show" is called Endurocross, and if there is one thing that it is not, predictable is that thing.

Round two of the six-race EX national championship rolled into the Lazy E Arena in Guthrie, Oklahoma, in the middle of August and the drama began a full week ahead of time. Taddy Blazusiak, the man predicted by many to control this year's championship, was taking in an Endurocross-style event in Washington the weekend previous when he stepped off in a big way during practice. The crash left him with what is best described as a broken face. Four hours of surgery and metal plates were required to put Taddy back together again and he was forced to watch his points lead disappear without even getting on the track.

Taddy's absence meant that there would be a first-time winner at the end of the night in Oklahoma. Only Taddy, David Knight, John Dowd, and Ryan Hughes have won Endurocross main events and since none of them were in attendance, the door was wide open and many riders wanted to step through it. Adding to the excitement was that this was the first round of the \$50,000 Geico Triple Crown. If a rider is able to win Oklahoma, Ohio, and the finale at Las Vegas they will take home an additional \$50,000. If that doesn't stir things up, just think back to what happened last year when the same stakes were on the table.

The Lazy E Arena is pretty much out in the middle of nowhere, but the entire complex could pass for a small town. The floor of the arena is massive compared to the Orleans Arena in Vegas; probably four times as large, which means that the racecourse is much more open than a "standard" EX course. Also unique is that there is no concrete under the dirt, which means no exposed slick concrete surfaces creeping up during the program. I heard a rumor that there may be a section of trees "planted" for next year's event and this may be the only venue in which that could happen. Did I mention that the dirt is among the best on the planet?

Support Classes

The Four-Stroke main event was the first race of the

night program and it featured Colorado resident and quickest Expert qualifier Kyle Calderini on his Honda 250F. Having made Supercross main events this season, Calderini isn't afraid to grab some air and he did that by launching the logs doubles and pulling a huge lead. On the final lap though, things got very tight as Calderini got hung up in the rocks allowing Jesse Robinson and desert specialist Nick Burson to close in. At the checkered flag all three riders were within a few seconds, with Calderini getting the win and Robinson second.

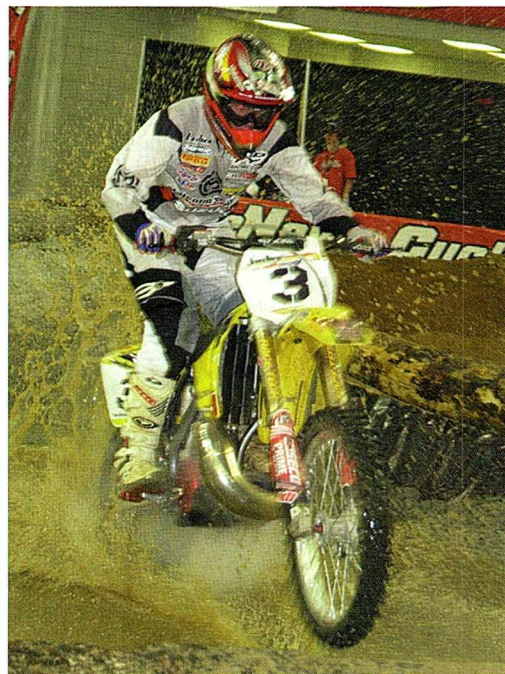
In the Two-Stroke final Eric Rhoten made it two for two for Colorado riders grabbing main events win in Oklahoma. This was a sign of things to come for Rhoten, as he got his first victory of the evening aboard his YZ250. Second place went to Geico team rider Eric Rodgers while GNCC regular Johnny Barber rounded out the top three on his KTM.

Up next was the Vet main event and Texan Haydn Franklin took the holeshot with Yamaha riders Tod Sciacqua and Steve Leivan in second and third. All three riders were locked together and pulled a big lead on the rest of the pack. Sciacqua took a shot at the lead by doubling a jump section but Franklin closed the door and held him off while Leivan waited for something to happen. It nearly did on lap two, as both riders got sideways climbing out of the pool and all three riders blasted through the sand almost side by side. Approaching the white flag, all three riders took different lines through the rock section and Franklin ultimately went down, putting Sciacqua in front with Leivan in second.

The race was far from over, as the two riders who battled it out during the '07 series were locked into their closest battle yet. Leivan got oh-so-close to the lead in the rock/sand turn when Sciacqua stumbled, but then last year's class champ Sciacqua doubled again and added a couple of bike lengths to his lead. That's about how far apart they were at the checkered flag too, with Sciacqua just holding off the WR250 of Leivan. Franklin dusted himself off and took third.



Damon Huffman seems to be getting his Endurocross legs, with a race-long battle with teammate Ricky Dietrich and finishing second overall. (Kinney Jones photos)



Nick Brozovich finished fourth after running as high as second in the final event. (Todd Topham photo)

by Steve Leivan

IS OK

by Robinson at nearly the same time. Calderini hung on to get the heat win over Haaker and both were in the main event.

Heat two saw Zip Ty Racing rider Nick Brozovich lead the entire way, but the guy to watch was Jamie Lanza. He was buried in the pack at the start and then fell in the water on the opening lap, but the smallest rider in the field made pass after pass until he was into second and he and Brozovich were also in the main.

The third heat gave everyone an idea of what to look for in the main event with Monster Kawasaki team-

mates Damon Huffman and Ricky Dietrich running away. Huffman got the heat race win and both riders looked especially strong. Missing the main by one spot was Geoff Aaron on his Christini. The rider that many looked to capitalize on Taddy's misfortune rode strong but was just a little off the pace on the quick-paced track.

Semi one saw Eric Rhoten take the win (to go with his Open Two-Stroke victory earlier in the night) on his YZ250. The second semi saw the always entertaining Wally Palmer hold it all together and make his first main event. After launching over the finish line jump like only Wally can do, he then proceeded to cram his Christini into some corral gates when he couldn't get slowed down exiting the track. Ty Davis ripped a huge holeshot in semi three and never looked back to put himself in the main for the second time in as many races.

In the Last Chance Qualifier, Aaron got out front immediately and then it all went wrong when he tucked the front end while crossing an angled log. The pack all went by before he could remount and that spelled an end to his disappointing night. Kyle Redmond did everything right and took the final spot into the main event on his KTM. Also making the main event by virtue of his Dash for Cash performance was Phil Smage, who did the same thing in Las Vegas. At neither event did he win the Dash, but since he finished second both times and the winner was already in the main event (Rhoten this week – who took his third win of the evening), he was in the final race of the night and taking home some cash.

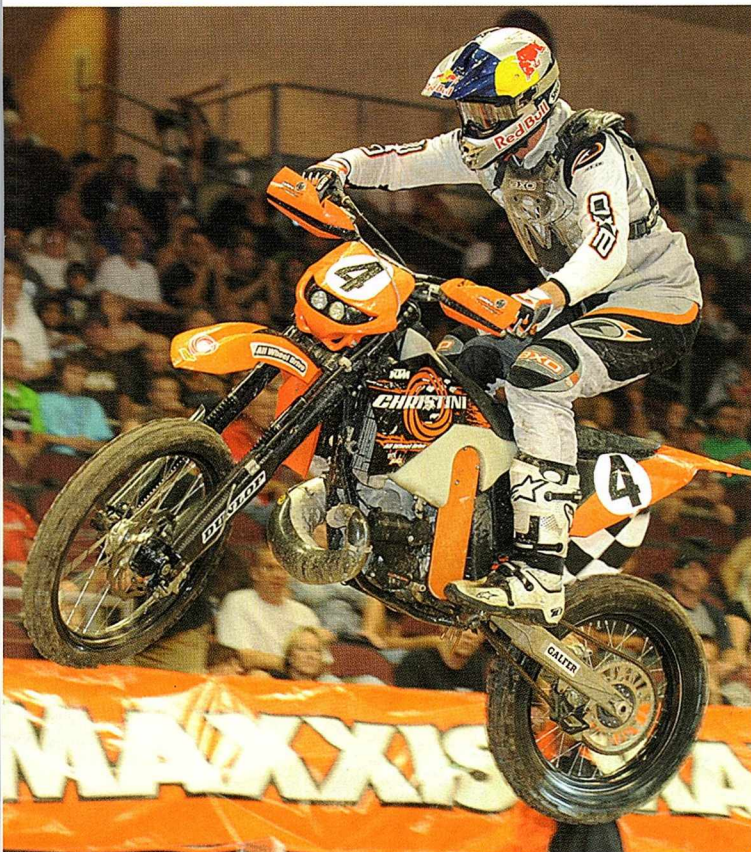
Since lap times for the quickest guys on this longer track were in the 1:15 – 1:20 neighborhood (rather than a more typical 50 second lap time) the eight lap main event was changed to a six lapper. The Kawasakis of Huffman and Dietrich led the way at the start with Haaker and Brozovich running in third and fourth. After crossing the big tires, the track made a tight left hand turn over a couple of logs and loose rocks in a sandy corner. Haaker nailed Dietrich as everyone seemed insistent on taking the same inside line. Huffman got away clean and Brozovich moved into second while Dietrich held on with one hand momentarily to hang onto third. Haaker got the worst of the deal and came out in fourth. Dietrich moved by Brozovich and into second around the pool, and just prior to the end of lap one exiting the rocks, Brozovich fell and Haaker rode over parts of his Suzuki and into third.

From there Huffman seemed to be in control. Dietrich was within a couple of seconds but both riders were turning very similar lap times and the gap stayed the same. Huffman was the only one going for the first leg of the log double since the slick logs made it seem too risky for the rest of the pack. Huffman would wheelie out of the corner and slam into the face of the logs and use the rebound to help him clear the obstacle lap after lap. His Supercross experience was at work in that section of the track.

Coming out of the rock section at the end of lap four, Huffman made his only real stumble of the race. He came out of the rocks a little bit out of shape and didn't have enough drive to completely get over a log going up a jump face. While his back tire spun on the log and he pushed with his legs, Dietrich slipped past and into the lead. The race was "on" now, and Huffman tried everything he could to find a way around. They collided over the tires and then Huffman's log double line drew him very close, but Dietrich held tough.

With one lap to go the crowd was on its feet and all eyes were on the battle for the victory. You could cover the teammates with a blanket, and according to Dietrich after the race, if they had been on different teams they might have taken each other out. In the pool, Huffman got a little sideways and gave Dietrich just enough space that it appeared the log double line wouldn't be enough. Huffman went for it again but got too much spin off the face and slammed into the second pile, narrowly avoiding a major crash.

Dietrich only had to negotiate the rock section once more and the WORCS points leader did that to capture his first Endurocross victory. Huffman ended up second and was no doubt disappointed with the outcome. Haaker survived a last lap fall exiting the rocks to take the final spot on the podium while Brozovich took his second fourth place finish in as many races. Redmond rounded out the top five after coming through the day qualifiers. ▲

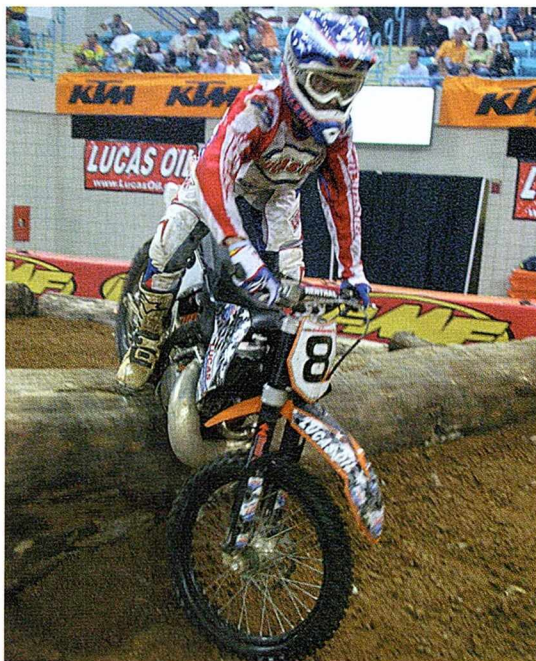


Talk about unpredictable. The one rider most favored to capitalize on a race vacated of the injured Taddy Blasuziak was Geoff Aaron, but Aaron failed to make the main.

Phil Smage took complete control of the Trialscross class when Keith Wineland fell on the opening lap and Smage took his second win of the series. Wineland circulated the rest of the race to claim second while Missouri rider Shannon Kenworthy rounded out the podium on his borrowed CRF150 after a race-long battle with Nick Saia.

Expert Night Show

When the first of three heat races left the line, fast qualifier Kyle Calderini led the way with Colton Haaker on his new Lucas Oil sponsored ride in pursuit. Even though the water in the pool was getting drug around the course and making the log doubles extremely slippery, Calderini was still willing to go for it and this helped him establish a solid lead. Haaker seemed to be in a safe second (and a transfer spot) until he stalled in the rock section and couldn't get his bike to fire. This opened the door for GNCC regular Jesse Robinson, but Haaker didn't give up and reeled Robinson back in. On the final lap Calderini got hung up in the rocks and Haaker was able to slip



Colton Haaker continues to do well, finishing in the final spot on the podium. (Topham photo)

NOBLE WOODS WE

A great ride...when it's dry...

Berwick, ME 8/9

The Seacoast Trail Riders have blossomed lately as a club and as club members who are involved in competitive events in NETRA. I'm not sure if they even existed a half dozen years ago, or if anyone from the area was involved with the enduro or hare scrambles series. But, with several members posting excellent results in recent enduros and the club hosting the Noble Woods Weekend the last three years, it appears that this group is here to stay. For the third consecutive year their weekend consisted of a Saturday enduro and a turkey run on Sunday. This year also featured a big bike ride on Saturday, so pretty much anyone who enjoys any form of off road riding could find a reason to be in Berwick, Maine, on the second weekend in August.

The southern Maine woods are home to some of the finest trails to be found anywhere in New England. The Seacoast Trail Riders again utilized a large number of local farmer's properties to lay out a course that consisted of several miles of almost rock-free single track, along with some routine field crossings and ATV trails from the surrounding public access lands. The Boisvert Farm was again ground zero for the enduro, as both a start/camping area as well as providing the first trail section of the day. The Boisvert's have been most gracious in allowing us the use of their property and a means for the Seacoast Trail Riders to host this event. We camped Friday night before the event and again Saturday night and made an easy weekend of it.

As stated, the trails here are a blast to ride. The lack of rocks is a welcome reprieve and the scenic farmland just adds to the whole experience. The rich topsoil makes for good traction in the farmland and deep woods, and the more

Photos by Jay Chittenden



Above: Brooks Hamilton built onto his points lead with a running-away win at the Noble Woods enduro. Left: Jeff Staples slithered to second overall.



open areas are gravelly and fast, so things continue to be a lot of fun.

That's the way it was...in 2006.

Last year we had a bit of rain, and the mellow trails got very slick and technical, making for a less than casual outing and more of, well, an enduro. But this year you see, this year it rained. Not like a little piddly two-inch dowsing. I mean a good two or three week-long supply of intermittent rainfall on already saturated ground from a heavy snow melt in the spring, and continued moisture throughout the summer. Cap that off with heavy storms during the previous two weeks and a torrential downpour on Friday, and the stage was set for a survival run on Saturday morning.

Right out of the back of the Boisvert Farm we had a seven mile section of sweet single track. When you finished that, go back to your truck and load up. That was the day for about 70 of the 140 entries. The ruts must have started with the first rider and probably by minute six or eight it was easy to get stuck footpeg-deep in a rut. The later minutes saw a very high attrition rate with the rapidly deteriorating terrain and late starting position of the C class.

If you survived the first section, the next 20 or so miles would challenge the rider and their bikes with deep ruts, with a clay-like soil exposed from beneath the topsoil that had the consistency of peanut butter, and standing water of vary-

by Rich Seymour

WEEKEND

ing depths that reached seat height at times. It was really a spectacle out there. Riders zombie-like with a glazed look in their eyes, just trying to forge ahead with little regard for how late they were. Rather more of a will to survive than a concern for what place they would finish, if they finished at all. Teamwork was employed in some of the deeper ruts and for the occasional drowned bike. One saving grace is that there was but one hill climb, and that wasn't too difficult.

After gas the course took a turn for the better and the terrain was much more hard-packed. The main concern would be avoiding the deepest waters, where the seat-high levels would claim a few bikes with drowned engines.

By the end of the race, about half of the field made it to the finish intact. The club mercifully cut the ride short of its intended second pass through the first farm section, and if you made it through the last three-quarters of a mile and the deepest water of the day, an observation check was all that remained of the 70-mile ride.

Once again, the Seacoast Trail Riders put in a lot of work to provide a full weekend for all forms of off road riding. While the enduro bore the brunt of the weather-related aftermath, there were plenty of good miles to be had for the dual sport on Saturday and turkey run the following day. For those who have only ridden this event this year, you must know that as brutal as the conditions were on this day, the Berwick area trails are at least that much more fun under less severe conditions. The Seacoast club really knows how to string the sections together and set up a proper event, as anyone who rode in 2006 can tell you. Plan to return next year for a great ride; one that will undoubtedly have a few new sections for us to burn in.

The event overall winner was Brooks Hamilton once again. There doesn't seem to be anything or anyone capable of slowing this guy down. Jeff Staples came out and put in a valiant effort and scored a 30, only two points behind Hamilton, for second AA and second overall. Third overall went to Nick Marti, whose 33 was good for A High Point and a class win. Shawn Levesque (35), Ethan Broach (37), John Morrison (38), Billy Burns (40), Pete Tanner (44), and Rick Claxton (45), Marti Griff (47), and Super Senior rider Duncan Broatch (48) all had great rides. Home town guy Alex Boisvert posted an unreal score of 68, which doesn't seem that outrageous when compared to the ones you just read, but consider that he started from minute 28 in a ride where the top scores came from early minutes, and the number of stuck riders he had to work around, and things come into perspective. The B High Point trophy went to Kevin Novella who scored a 49, and the top C score came from one of five who even posted a score, Tim Gossum, who made it to check five with 150 points lost.

Between the food, camaraderie, camping and competition, Mother Nature still couldn't keep us from having a good time. I'm already planning to make two days of it next year. You should too. See you there. ↑

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BACK ATCHA!

Bobbitt backs up Ohio victory with a win in Minnesota

Duquette, MN 8/24

After watching Red Bull KTM teammate Mike Lafferty storm back from a broken foot to win two rounds of the AMA/FMF Racing National Enduro Series immediately upon his return and close to within a point in the series, Russell Bobbitt knew he had to fire back or Lafferty would take that momentum and roll over him en route to the championship.

So, he went to Ohio early and embarked on a more lengthy prep routine before the Moonshine National in New Straitsville, put on by the New Straitsville Enduro Riders. That apparently proved to be the turning point as the 2006 series champ ended up taking his first win since round two.

But more important to Bobbitt's quest for the crown was the fact that a pair of spoilers filled the rest of the podium. GNCC regulars Jimmy Jarrett and Barry Hawk were second and third at the end of



the day, with Team FMF/Suzuki Offroad's Jarrett actually leading until the last test section. Remarkably, it was his first National enduro, while Am Pro Yamaha's Hawk usually rides one or two a year as his schedule permits.

Lafferty had an off day, for him at least, and finished fourth, which is worth a dozen fewer points than a win. That dropped him from one point behind Bobbitt in series points to 13 behind as they headed to Duquette, Minnesota, for the Loose Moose National.

Again, Bobbitt headed to the area early to dial in his 250XC and get used to the terrain. "It was good because I got my suspension dialed and kind of got a good feeling for what the terrain was going to be like, and I did make some

Mike Lafferty got on the podium in dry Minnesota, his second place coming after a disappointing fourth in Ohio.

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changes to my bike that I don't normally do," he revealed. "I actually went to a narrower [handlebar]; I cut the bars down a little."

Bobbitt fired out of the gate like a motocrosser and set the pace, but Lafferty stuck close on his 450XCFW, as did Cycle Shack of Lubbock's Cole Kirkpatrick on his 250XC. It appeared that the race would come down to tie-breaker seconds until the fourth section, when Bobbitt made a flip to record a 9 while Lafferty came in just after the flip to 10, Kirkpatrick doing

exactly the same.

That was the break Bobbitt needed and he carried that margin to the finish, even though Lafferty outsped him in the three remaining afternoon tests. Thus, Bobbitt got the win over Lafferty and Kirkpatrick, and padded his points lead by an additional five to lead by 18 with only the two western rounds remaining.

But don't count Lafferty out just yet. Races out west

have been a nemesis for most East Coast-based competitors, though Lafferty has seemed to cope best, perhaps due to his wealth of experience. And then there's the possibility of local hot shoes coming in to play the spoiler role, much as Jarrett and Hawk did in Ohio. The championship is still up for grabs. ↑



Above: Local hero Dylan Debel sped to fifth overall and the Open A win. Right: Cole Kirkpatrick gets all cowboy en route to third in Minnesota, his best finish since winning round four at home in Texas.



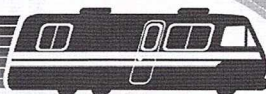
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COOL STUFF

Things we've tried

Flexx Bars

The Flexx handlebars from Fasst Company are good. I've had hand and wrist problems for many years, so when I found out about the Flexx Bars I had to have a set.

They come in many bends, so I took my favorite bars and matched up the Flexx Bars. It was actually pretty easy, they have plenty of information on their web site, www.fasstco.com.

The Flexx kit comes with four different elastomers, which determine the amount of flex the bars have. I chose the very softest elastomer and like it very much. I suppose for MX the harder compounds would be better, but for slow woods riding the soft worked best for me.

The bars flex down, but not up, so if you yank up on the bars you have a good solid connection. The bars really dampen the square edge hits like big roots and rocks. Yes, my hands and wrists feel better after a few days of riding.

The only possible downside could be the bars' weight, at 2.2 pounds they do add a little

weight up high on the bike. But really, for the advantage they have it is a small issue, one I don't even worry about. Also, the bars are fairly expensive. At \$329 that's a pretty good hit, but you can switch them out on your next bike and they should last many years, making them a better value over time. Plus they are made right here in the USA! In a day where most of our money is sent overseas by large corporations, it's nice to dial up the phone and talk right to the boss as he's multitasking, packaging orders and talking to customers.

Sturdy? Well, I don't really want to throw my bike on the ground very much, but I did

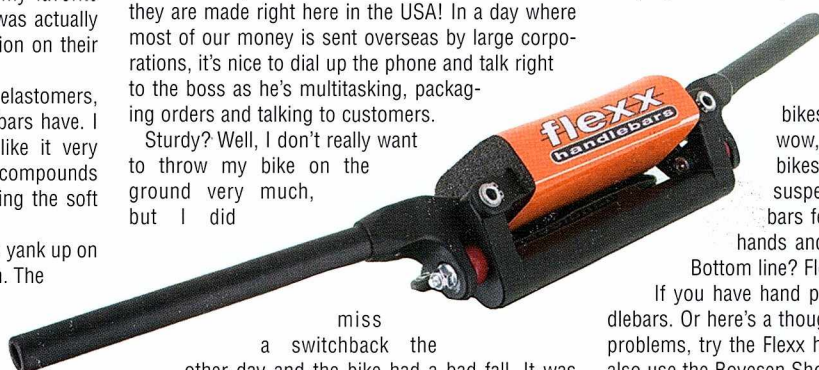
metric tons of force against the bars, but they didn't bend, so I figure they must be sturdy.

Flexx offers a one year 50 percent-off warranty program. Insurance won't allow them to sell replacement parts to repair bent bars, so they offer the 50 percent-off program. This is pretty fair, considering most dirt bike guys could screw up an anvil with a rubber chicken.

I also rode a couple of bikes with standard bars and wow, what a difference! Sure, the bikes were set up poorly and the suspension was terrible, but the bars felt like jack hammers in my hands and my wrists hurt afterward.

Bottom line? Flexx Bars rock!

If you have hand problems, try the Flexx handlebars. Or here's a thought: BEFORE you have hand problems, try the Flexx handlebars. I'm glad I did! I also use the Boyesen Shokout grip on the left side. It has a little shock absorption in it and I think it works well and helps my hands.



miss a switchback the other day and the bike had a bad fall. It was about ten feet straight down and the bars did not show any wear or tear. I can't give you any facts about

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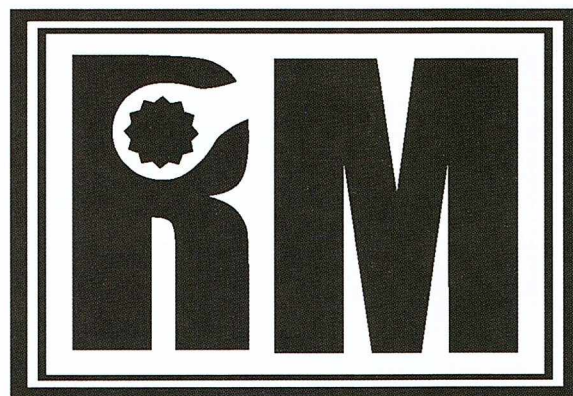
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While on the subject of joints and pains, I want to recommend Pivot Pegs, too. Those things work way better than I ever imagined. My feet and ankles really appreciate them.

Take care of your joints. If you don't, who will?

— CW

Motion Pro Carb Tool

You're going to read a specification for adjusting the mixture screw on your dirt bike to get the bike to run right. The mixture screw might as well be called the "idle mixture screw" because that's when you adjust it, but it affects the way your bike transitions from idle, as well as how well it idles.

Like all carb jetting, the mixture position is critical and it changes depending on temperature and other atmospheric conditions. So you

really should be adjusting it as you need it, but we know you don't. Why not? Because the mixture screw is usually very difficult to get to.

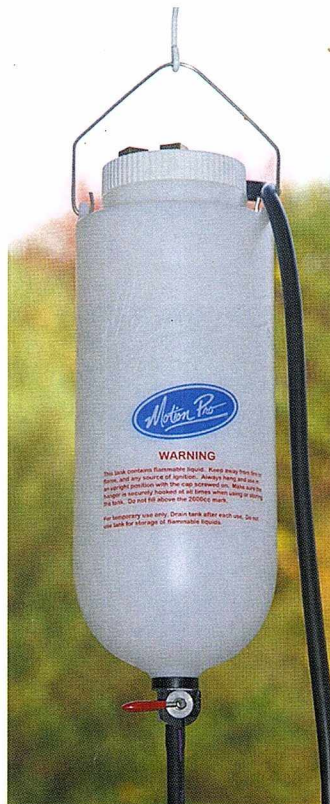
Okay, the quick answer on most carbs is go to Zip-Ty Racing's web site (ziptyracing.com) and buy a finger-adjust mixture screw for your bike, and have done with it. With this little device you only have to turn the knurled knob with your finger tips, and some even have numbers etched into them to help you keep track of where you're at (as an aside, make real sure you get all the parts back in when you install one of these. There's a small washer, a rubber o-ring and a spring on your

stock mixture screw, and they have to go back in the right order. Forget them or get them in wrong and you'll lose your new fancy mixture screw).

That's all well and good, but if you're dealing with carbs with mixture screws that can't be replaced, street bikes or Adventure bikes with multiple carbs, or, like us, many bikes in a year that just make it economically impractical to replace the mixture screw on every one of them, well, you're going to start wanting a 90-degree screwdriver.

Motion Pro makes such a thing. We have one of their 90-Degree Carb Tools and it's really handy. Just select the right size bit for the end—and it comes with every bit you'll ever need for a carb—get it under the carb and in position, and adjust to your heart's content. Turn the handle clockwise to tighter, counter-clockwise to loosen. You can do it in much less time, without crippling your fingers trying to get a miniature screwdriver under there.

One sad note, though. Motion Pro's tool won't fit between a KTM 400/450/525's mixture screw and the electric starter motor. Pretty much nothing will, so for that we'd recommend a Zip-Ty mixture screw. There are plenty of other little



uncomfortable bike tasks made easier with an angle-screwdriver, so we'd consider the Motion Pro Carb Tool a pretty useful shop tool. See it at MotionPro.com, or ask for it at your dealer.

Motion Pro Aux Tank

While we're at it, here's another tool you might not have, but you certainly will need if you do a lot of tuning in your garage. Motion Pro's Auxiliary Tank is just that, a small fuel tank you can connect to your bike while you have the bike's gas tank off and you're working on the carb tuning or whatever. Any time you have to run the bike with the tank off. This particular tank is one that's specially designed to work with fuel injection systems that demand an "in and out" connection. It's something we've never dealt with yet, but when we do (and fuel injection is coming on fast) we'll be ready for it with this tank.. The Auxiliary Tank is \$79.90 with all the hoses and such, from your Motion Pro dealer or at MotionPro.com. ⬆



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SPAIN ON THE R

Fine riding and fine wines in a once-in-a-lifetime dirt bike tour of Spain

It would probably be best to start back a couple of years when the idea was first conceived. My good friend Alfonso Acevedo and I decided to upgrade our motorcycle livery. With him being a KTM guy, we decided on a couple of 2004 model 450 EXCs. Neither of us had much chance to ride these great bikes that first year, with him being so busy at work and myself dealing with three kids in college. But we managed to take a late fall trip to West Virginia and ride the recently developed Hatfield/McCoy trail system.

Upon returning home, we decided to do more of this sort of thing. So the following year, we did the UP Dual Sport Safari in two long weekends. The trip went very well, so we decided to raise the bar again the following year. We talked about going out west (which we shall do one day), but we decided instead on going to Europe—Spain, to be exact—and we began packing our gearbags for the Pyrenees Mountains.

This would be my first trip overseas to a foreign land. Of course, I've been to border towns in Mexico and different parts of Canada, but never anything like this. I can honestly say that this was the trip of a lifetime and I would encourage everyone to do so, but would make a couple of suggestions to anyone seriously thinking of doing it. Number one is that I wish I had spent a little more time learning the wonderful Spanish language, especially the dialect spoken in Northern Spain, as it would have benefited me greatly. The other thing I wish I had done is gotten myself in better physical shape, as the riding that we encountered was like nothing I had ever experienced before, even in West Virginia. So to put it mildly, it proved to be very challenging for me. But more on that later.

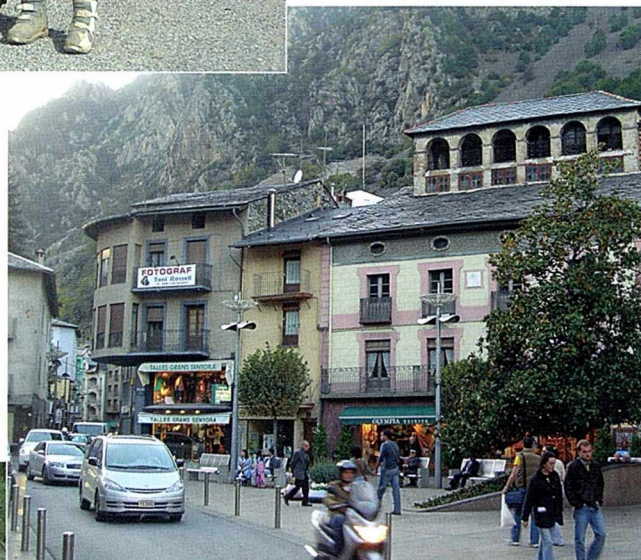
Let me introduce you to the cast of characters on this trip. Alfonso had a couple of riding buddies from the Detroit area who decided to join us. They were Carlos Gonzalez, who is from Argentina, then Brazil, and now living and working in the States. Next was Jim Blasius, a successful business owner from the metro Detroit area. Alfonso is originally from Mexico and has been living and working in the States for over ten years. He will soon



return to Mexico to head up operations for his company. Then there is yours truly, a born and bred Michigander who has not ridden dirt bikes in many other places other than our wonderful trail system here, with the exception of that earlier trip I mentioned to West Virginia.

Of course, I had to put some things together for the trip, such as passport, international driver's license (rental car), shots (hepatitis

A) and decent luggage to transport all of the needed riding gear. We decided on attending one of the adventure tours that KTM puts on all over Europe. This particular one was called "Spain on the Rocks," for reasons I would learn all too well. Once we paid our deposit to secure our spot, obtained our passports, made our travel plans, packed our bags and then made our final payments—of course all monetary matters done in Euros—we were ready for the departure day to come. This would truly be an adventure of more than just riding dirt bikes—it was becoming much



more than just a motorcycle trip. I decided to depart out of Chicago separate from the others as I live between Detroit/Chicago and had a son going to school there, and planned to catch up with him as well.

Our first destination would be Barcelona, Spain. It was a gathering spot where KTM would pick us up and drive us the two to three hours into the mountains to spend the week riding. But when we arrived, we rented a Chrysler mini-van so we could drive ourselves and our gear to a much-anticipated wine tour at the end of the week that our resident wine connoisseur and chief placador Carlos had planned.

Upon arriving at our palace in Peramola, called the Hotel Can Boix, we were absolutely astonished at the accommodations and had no idea just how wonderful a place this would prove to be. This is most definitely a place you could take your

by Ray Lasich

OCKS

wife/girlfriend and she would have no complaints...except maybe that shopping was a fair distance away. We would go on to enjoy the breakfast buffet and the most eloquent dinners you can imagine with our choice of wine each of the seven days and nights that we stayed. It was truly a beautiful place to ride out of at the base of a huge mountain. So beautiful that Mini-Cooper decided to use it as a coffee stop on their UK journalist press tour. We were treated to a fine display of 2007 right-hand drive Minis upon our return from riding one day.

Speaking of riding, this is how our week went. We would get up in the morning, eat breakfast and put on our riding gear. Then we'd mount our 2006 KTM 400 EXCs and ride about 15km to the workshop where our guide would perform any maintenance required on the bikes. We would typically gas up the night before at the local petrol station. Both guides—Karl and Stefan—were German, but spoke English. Both guides had also represented their country in previous ISDE events, so especially challenging trail was no big deal—for THEM!

Our overall group consisted of seven guys from the Netherlands who rode with Stefan and our group of six, with four currently living in the States and two others, both from Germany, in addition to the lead guide, Karl. Both groups would leave separately and pretty much go their separate ways on the trail, only to meet up somewhere in the mountains for lunch at some out of the way restaurant/cantina. I know I should be talking more about the riding, as it was truly awesome, but it was the entire Spanish experience that was so intoxicating to me.

The trails we rode were some of the most challenging stuff that I'd ever seen. I understand why the European riders are so smooth and controlled when riding because in this stuff, fine throttle and



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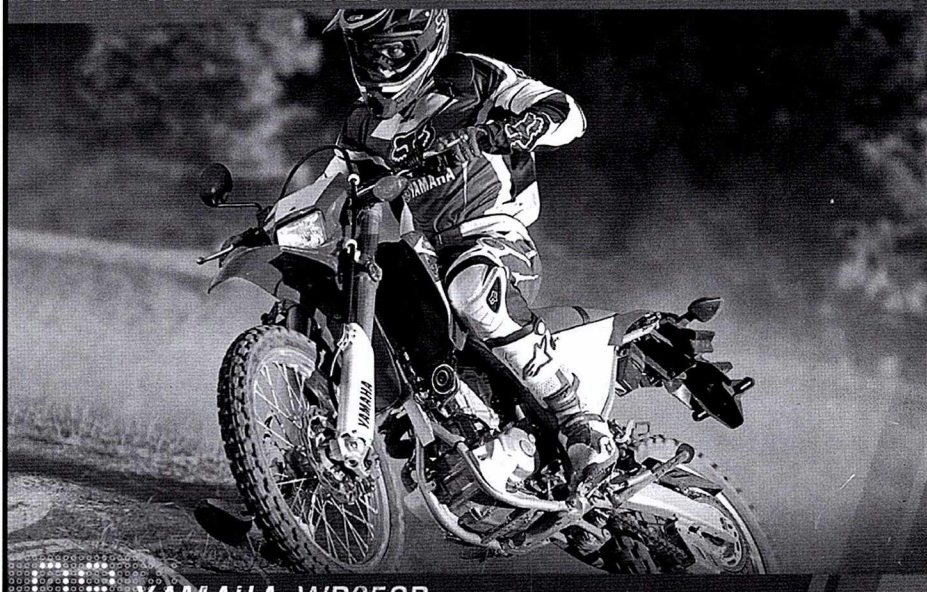


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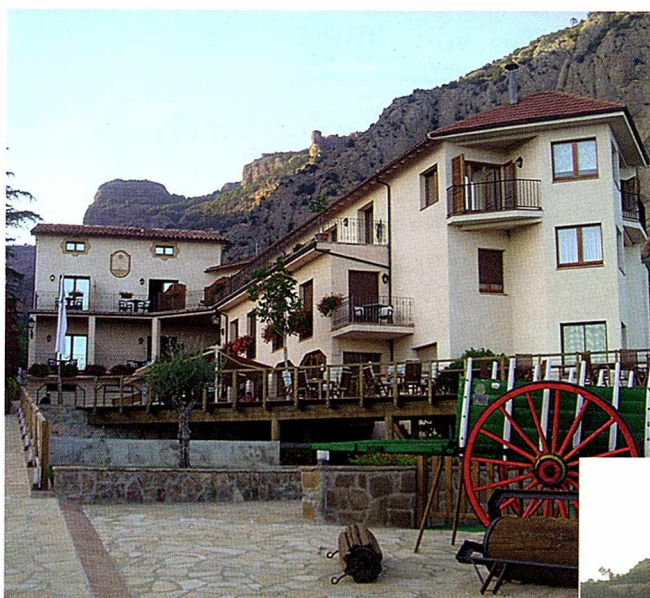


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clutch control is a must. Spain is littered with rocks, big and small and it was not unusual to be off doing some single track and run across a rock step too tall to scale. Occasionally, one rider would have to help another lift his bike up and over to continue. The constant uphill and downhill action through the rocks and tight trees definitely proved to be challenging for me. With my questionable fitness, our daily workout in the mountains made for an extremely quiet night after the late, spectacular dinners we enjoyed. My roommate Jim mentioned my horrible snoring more than once. I was probably close to comatose on most nights. It was funny because although I fell down more times in that week than I probably had in the last ten



years, I still felt that I had ridden pretty well. Being so tired, it was tough finding strength to be aggressive while riding when the most challenging parts of the trail confronted us.

Each night, Jim and I would compare scars and bruises. As the week wore on, that turned into a contest of sorts and provided some good entertainment, but Jim would usually win. Due to the number of rocks in Spain, I found that relaxing was not much of an option while riding except in a very few spots; typically on some more open two-tracks or the little bit of asphalt we would ride getting to or from town for lunch. The guides would preplan a lunch somewhere in the mountains at a little cantina and we would always have a great time bench racing while sampling some of the local cuisine.

The riding was some of the most beautiful that I have ever experienced. We would freely travel the countryside, crossing small farms and villages and really saw how the locals lived. It was so incredible to be up on top some of the mountain vistas and look down into villages below or across the valley to other mountains. We were not so high that snow was ever a concern. In fact, the weather was about perfect. It was cool in the mornings and maybe got up to 65°F by midday, only to cool down again in the afternoon. I would go back in a minute—but only after working on my Spanish and fitness before doing so.

A few observations on local points of interest.

While traveling through town for lunch one day, we came across a couple of odd looking bikes. It was the KTM Gauloises Dakar Rally Team out practicing for the event. As it turns out, it was Cyril Depres, the 2007 Dakar winner along with local talent and teammate Esteve Pujol. We had a chance to meet Esteve at his parent's hotel/restaurant/cantina one night and enjoyed talking about some of his past Dakar and other rally experiences.

On our layday mid-week, we decided to travel to the small country of Andorra just to the north of us. On the way, we stopped and enjoyed a neat go-cart track where we engaged in some friendly competition. Once we crossed the border into Andorra, the mountains got even steeper and more picturesque. There we reveled in the local shopping experience. This is truly a beautiful part of the world. It was odd to see four-wheel ORVs with license plates on them ridden legally on the busy downtown streets.

Once we were finished with the motorcycle portion of the trip and had our going away party, we received our parting gifts from KTM and our coveted completion awards. Next up was the wine tour portion of our trip. We traveled west toward the city of Logrono and spent an interesting day on a wine tour at several of the many wineries in that area. We probably had one of the wildest and latest nights of

the week in that town when we walked the streets until early in the morning, enjoying the local eateries and their specialties. Things seem to start late in Spain and end very late as well.

The last couple of days of our trip brought us back to Barcelona, where we would have a chance to further enjoy this fine historic city. Europe is so different than the States and it is so very evident in this Barcelona. Of course we visited many of the standard tourist sites, including the Olympic games venue and an incredible working, living temple called the Sagrada Familia. If you ever get a chance to visit, it is a truly phenomenal work of art that is like 50 years in the making, with another 50 years to go until completion.

In a nutshell, Spain is a uniquely amazing coun-



try with a rich motorcycle history. There was even a wonderful motorcycle museum in the area where we rode that we managed to visit. There we enjoyed many of the Spanish-bred motorcycles over the years. Names such as Bultaco, Montesa and Ossa immediately come to mind, but there are many other makes and models that I had never heard of.

This KTM Adventure trip is one that I'll never forget, truly an experience of a lifetime. With good fortune, I'll look forward to participating in many others in the future.

Hasta Luego!

Ray

(Reprinted from Great Lakes Trailrider magazine.

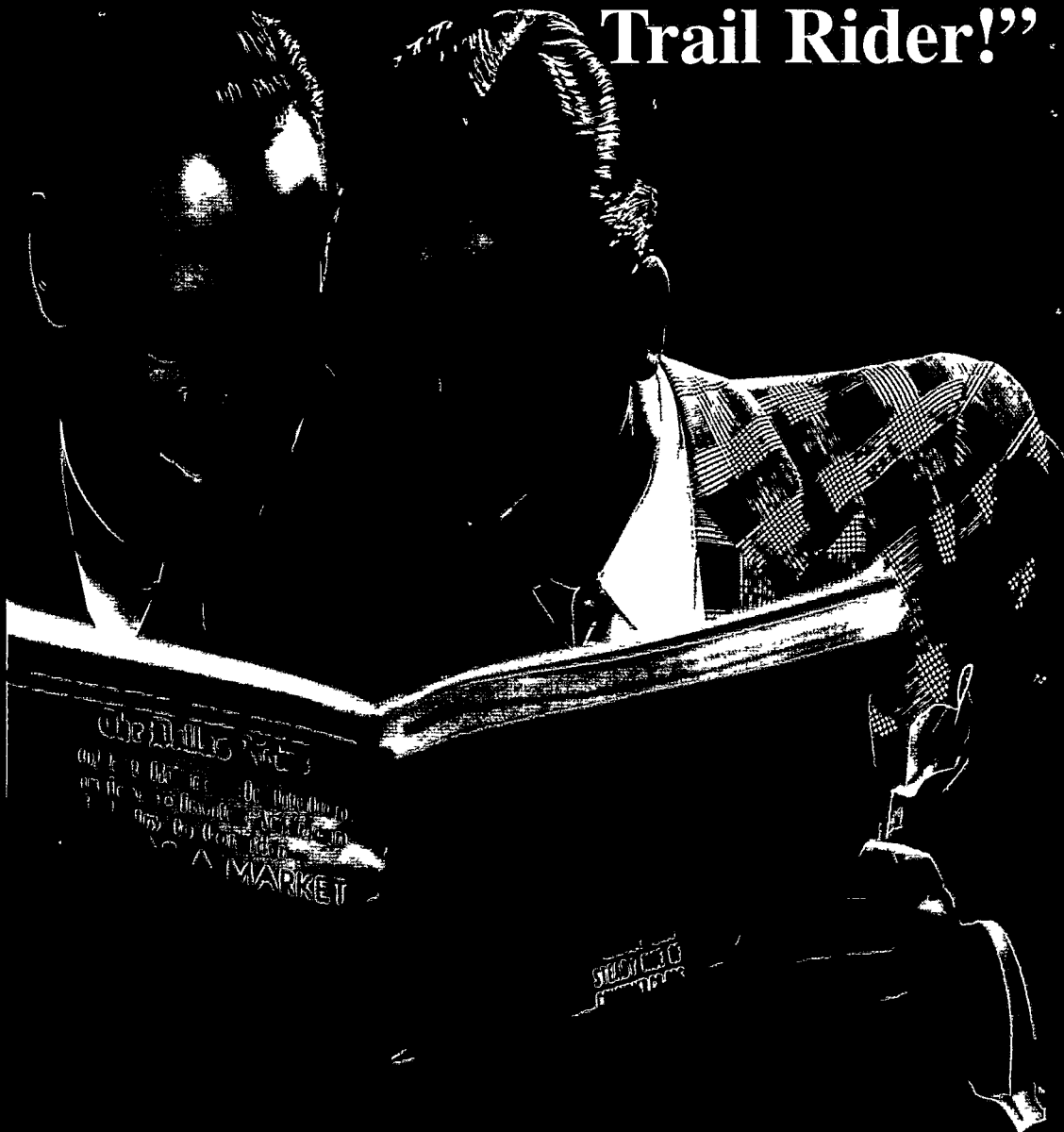
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1980 Husqvarna 250WR Ground-up restoration. Mass. title, \$2000 obo, call 781-944-3498.

2002 Honda CR250 NH street titled. Headlight, taillight, brake light. Factory Conn. woods suspension. All woods guards, 18 inch rear wheel, Gnarly pipe and S/A silencer, V-Force reeds, 3.2 gal. IMS tank. Well maintained and runs well, \$1950. 603-878-9948 leave message.

2003 KTM 200EXC Totally rebuilt, all guards, 3.1 IMS clear tank, GPR stabilizer, exc. cond., \$2500 obo, 781-831-0625.

1986 Yamaha TY350 Trail Bikes Two avail., good shape, new tires, \$1750 each or both for \$3200. 616-638-6234.

2002 KTM 250EXC RFS Purchased new in 2004. Ohio title (street legal), skid plate, handguards, Baja Designs dual sport kit, extra sprockets, some spare parts. Mainly ridden around town, some trail riding, never raced. Amherst, OH, \$3250 obo, call Al, 440-988-2193.

2003 KTM 300 EXC Factory Conn., new plastic, chains & sprockets, very clean. Asking \$3500 obo, 603-679-5785.

2006 KTM 200XCW Forks revalved with heavier springs, shock revalved w/bladder and heavier spring, Stealth fly-wheel weight, GPR damper, handguards, headlight & tail-light, computer sensor and wiring installed. Ready to race enduros, clean & well maintained. \$4495, 302-834-4568 day, 302-834-4411 eves, 302-229-1805 cell.

2005 Kawasaki KX250 Large Clarke tank, forks and shock revalved, FMF pipe, Stealth flywheel, Pro-Taper bars and handguards, non-slip seat cover, all stock and extra parts inc. Only used for ECEA enduros, well maintained, looks new. \$3995, 302-834-4568 day, 302-834-4411 eves, 302-229-1805 cell.

2007 Kawasaki KXF 250, Factory Conn. susp, Fluidyne Rads, Boyesen Super Cooler and Accelerator Pump, Dr D Exhaust, low hrs because two '07 bikes. More parts avail, \$4000 Mike@Picard.com 201-615-0387.

1997 KTM 250EXC PA title, skid plate, radiator and hand guards, ready to ride. \$1100, call L.M. at 610-488-7446.

2007 KTM 300XCW Factory Conn., tall and stock seats, shark fin, hand guards, low hours. \$4800.
Dbroatch@earthlink.net, 860-255-7733.

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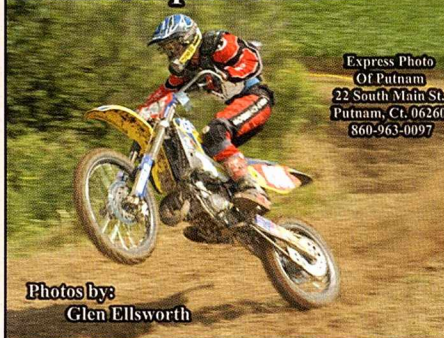
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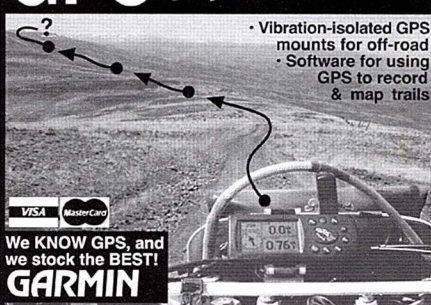
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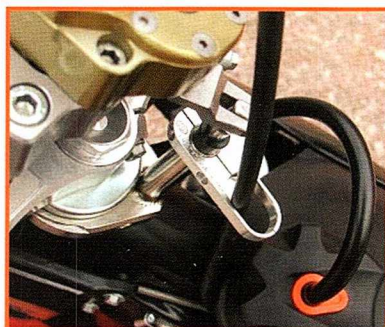
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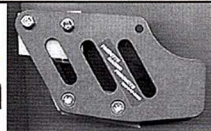
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by Ed Hertfelder

Before We Forget

Let's begin with a history lesson: the vast New Jersey pine forests are crisscrossed with very old sand roads that seem to go nowhere. And NOWHERE is where most of them DO go.

Thankfully, all these thousands of dead end and narrow sand roads usually end at a large circular area large enough for even an extended wheelbase van to easily make a U-turn, thus avoiding the hard work of reversing out along a narrow winding sand road lined with tree stumps serious enough to modify a front suspension lower control arm into bad modern art.

All of these narrow sand roads were pushed into the dense New Jersey hardwood forests of tall oak trees by hard working teams of woodsmen intent on dropping the monster trees and "bucking" them into manageable lengths so they could be stacked, covered with a layer of sod, then set alight to be turned into charcoal.

And this went on for over TWO HUNDRED years as dozens of hungry blast furnaces used the charcoal to melt the iron-rich ore dug out of the New Jersey bogs. During the late 1700s, the smoke from charcoal production was dense enough to force Philadelphia to use street lighting twenty four hours a day at times. And now you know where the very beneficial cranberry bogs came from.

And all these dead-end sand roads became notorious as the burial grounds for nearby big city gangsters. A recent "Sopranos" TV show was filmed in an area so remote that Norm White and me found a long-abandoned vine-covered and untouched snowmobile there in the 1990s. And the last time either of us could recall snow in the area was at least ten years earlier.

And neither one of us was curious enough to investigate suspicious grave-size mounds and the occasional chrome rocker panel molding ripped off low slung Cadillacs.

The day we returned to take photos of the old snowmobile we met, on the same old sand road, A FIFTY TWO SEAT EX-GREYHOUND BUS! The young driver was taking it from Philadelphia to a casino in Atlantic City and was convinced he had found a shortcut to his destination.

So much for history.

All these dead end sand roads were also perfect for a type of motorcycle competition called Cross-Countrys. They were popular from the late 1930s into the middle 1970s and they went like this:

It was a "one man show" from start to finish. Just one man with a motorcycle, a handful of nails and a claw hammer, maybe trying to make enough money for a new 400 X 18 tire, and not much caring if he did or not.

The 'promoters' that I remember were once strong, fast woods riders who had gone old and looking for an excuse to gather together riders for a civilized ride with no mud, water crossings or impossible time schedules. There was an unwritten guarantee that everyone would finish and not

be hurt so bad that he couldn't drive home afterwards.

They were fun events, these Cross Countrys, more like a social event than a dog-eat-dog motorcycle bar-rattling undeclared war that might end with broken bikes scattered into the back end of all four adjacent zip codes.

No one ever got lost on a Cross

Country, and broken motorcycles might receive \$180.98 worth of free transmission parts and labor as it laid on the soft sand, if you and a local shop foreman broke at the same spot. It wasn't necessarily a labor of love on the foreman's part. He just wanted to get your machine running so you could tow HIS back to the parking area before both of you were killed and eaten by the horrible "sweat flies."

Advertising for Cross

Countrys was limited to cheap

mimeograph notices thoughtfully taped up INSIDE motorcycle shop windows. Usually the promoter himself tried to make a bit more than the three dollar entry fee hawking cold drinks, hot dogs and dollar-size bowls of chili. A knowledgeable chili gourmet might mention, after glancing around to make sure the local game warden wasn't in earshot, "This chili meat has been eating a fair amount of acorns!"

Here's the setup: The promoter would gather a dozen old phone books, the thin ones, from small towns. Taking his nails and claw hammer the promoter would ride out to the circular end of six or seven "charcoal roads" and nail a phone book to a prominent tree. A really DEVIUS promoter would also lay tire tracks up charcoal roads and NOT nail up a phone book. You paid your maybe three dollar entry fee, the promoter would show you on a GEODETIC SURVEY map of the main road passing the six roads that held a phone book. Riders would leave one a minute, winner would be the fastest time to return with a complete set of proper pages. It was common for two riders to 'pair off' on the main road then run up alternate

sand roads to gather two pages from the phone book and share them. This would only work if the other rider was a close blood relative, as it was easy to conceal the pages and tell your co-conspirator "Nothing there."

A dead straight rider who never lied, like myself, could never pull this off because it was just too hard to keep from laughing!

A valued Cross Country prize on the Sunday before Thanksgiving was a turkey, usually frozen, but an event at Chatsworth advertised a "fresh-killed 22 pound Tom."

What no one suspected, and only George the promoter knew, was that the bird was alive and you had to kill it.

As with any motorcycle event the best riders came out on top, and Howard Tomlin came up with the fastest time to gather up the required pages, and his eight-speed Husky passed me like a load of #9 buckshot.

The award ceremony took place in the parking lot alongside George's homemade box trailer behind his Studebaker pickup. Box trailers were preferred over the rail-type to carry motorcycles because if anything jarred loose it would usually stay on the trailer.

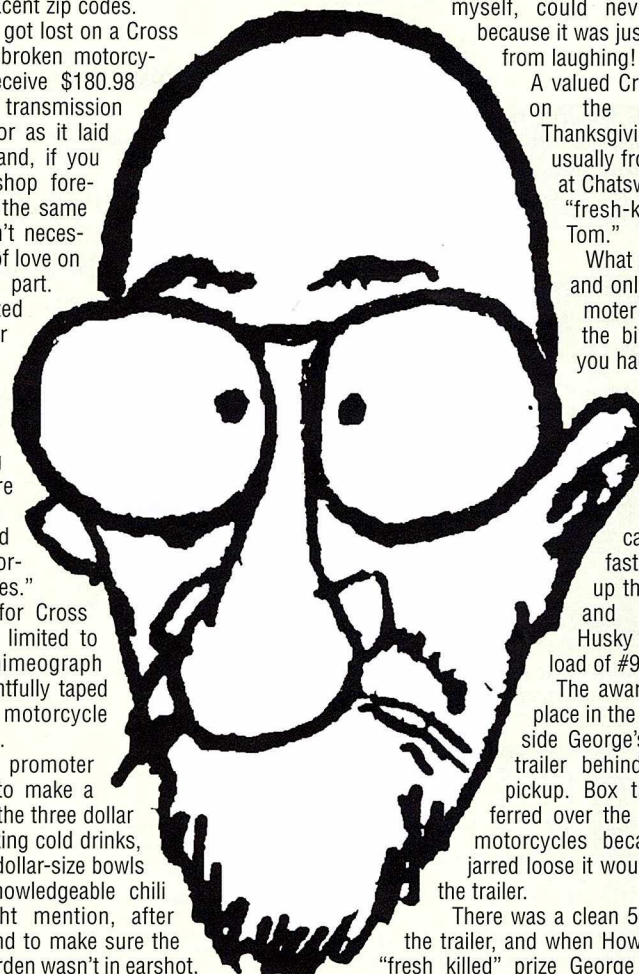
There was a clean 55 gallon drum on the trailer, and when Howard asked for his "fresh killed" prize George told him it was under the drum and handed him a hatchet!

Fortunately the parking lot was fenced on three sides and Howard had some farm-raised buddies, who herded the terrified beast into a corner and strapped it up with what used to be the clothesline at a nearby trailer park.

I heard later that George was a bit miffed because he never got his hatchet back.

—Ed Hertfelder

Ed Hertfelder is a teller of tales and writer of books, as well as author of the globally famous Duct Tapes stories. Write him. Send him a self-addressed stamped #10 envelope for a list of Hertfelder columns from the past plus information on Ed's latest books, to P.O. Box 17564, Tucson, AZ 85731. ▶



Delaware Enduro Riders Annual Hare Scrambles Series



rights. riding. racing.
American Motorcyclist Association



Sunday, October 26th

On The C&D Canal Property

DIRECTIONS: From Route 1 follow orange arrows from exit 152 to Del. Route 72 and 13 south approximately 2 miles to the start near Gunning Bedford School, Delaware City, DE.

Featuring the only phragmites trails in the world!
Fast, Fun, and Friendly – a Joy to ride!

ECEA Hare Scrambles Point Series 2008
Dist. 6 and VHSC Challenge
NETRA Welcome!

Large Open field grass track start with 4 mile course for PEEWEE, 6 mile course for MINI and 12 mile course for adults classes.
Free primitive camping – NO riding on Saturday
NO Pit bikes – Strictly Enforced !!

FEES

Admission to parking areas: \$5
Youth classes: \$25
Adult classes: \$35
Transponder scoring – available for purchase(\$15) or rent (\$10) at signup from ECEA officials

PEE WEE Classes: Start at 9 AM for 45 minutes

4-8, 50cc 2strk
4-8, 50cc oil injected motors & XR50cc
4-9, (Entry Level) 0-110cc 4strk Multispeed Auto & XR 80 4strk &PW80
7-9, 65cc 2strk
10-12, (Entry Level) 0-110cc 4strk Multispeed Auto & XR 80 4strk &PW80

Youth Event Classes: Start at 10:30 AM for 1 Hour

10-11, 0-65cc 2strk
10-11, 0-85cc 2strk
10-12, 0-125cc 4strk
10-up, (Entry level) women's
12-13, 0-85cc 2strk
12-15, 100cc & 85ccBigwheel 2strk
13-15, 0-150cc 4strk
14-15, 85 cc
AA Youth

Main Event: Start at 1:00 for 2 hours
AA

A200 B200 C200
A250/open B250/open C250/open
A 4-Stroke B 4-Stroke C 4-Stroke
A Vet(30+) BVet(30+) C Vet(30+)
A Sen(40+) B Sen(40+) C Sen(40+)
ASupSen(50) BSupSen(50) Women Master (60+)
Golden Master (70+)

Check our Website for further information:

www.delawareenduroriders.com

Sunday, November 16th

At Blue Diamond MX Park

DIRECTIONS: From I-95 North or South take Route 1 South to exit #156B onto Rt. 13 North. Turn right on Hamburg Road to Blue Diamond MX Park on the left.

Follow Orange Hare Scrambles Arrows to Start Area.
From the South follow Rt. 1 North over St. Georges Bridge.
Go straight at Rt. 13 exit #156. Turn right on Hamburg Road to Blue Diamond MX Park on the left.

ECEA Hare Scrambles Point Series 2008
Dist. 7 Hare Scrambles Point Series 2009
Dist. 6 and VHSC Challenge
NETRA Welcome!

Free Camping on premises Saturday
MX track is open for practice (for fee) on Saturday.
Large Starting area to an uphill turn. 2 mile course for PEEWEE on mostly MX track. 5 mile course for youth with super moto section. Main event is 8 miles with hill climb, super moto, mud hole and giant rocky downhill (maybe)!!

Sign-up Times

Mini and PeeWee sign up from 7:00
PeeWee until 8:30 and Youth until 10:00
Adult riders sign up from 10 AM to 12:30.
Races will NOT be held up for late comers.

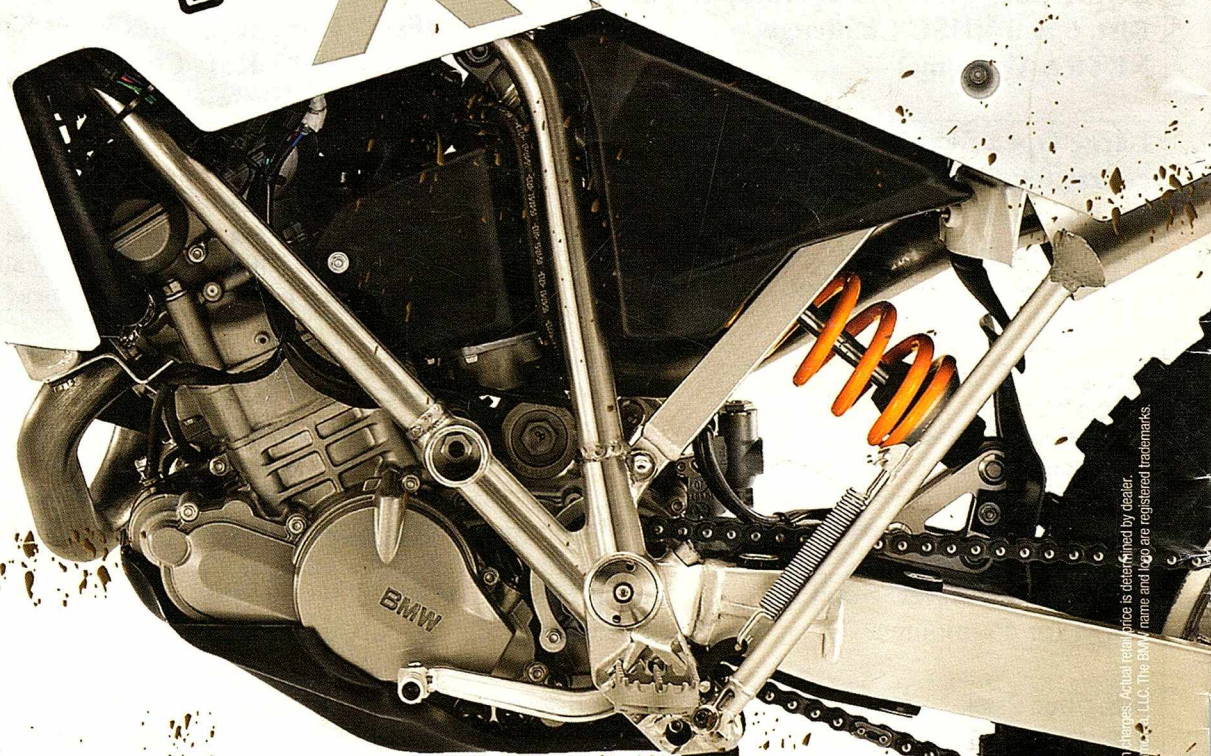
Cash Awards to Expert Classes based on number of entries per class
Award plaques to 10 places in all other classes

AMA membership required to ride these events – available at signup or online at:
www.AMADirectlink.com ahead of time.

For Youth classes: Download and print out the MINOR RELEASE form at
ecea.org/info/Youthonline.pdf and the PLEDGE form at ecea.org/info/sportsmanship_pledge.pdf

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G 450



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At its heart beats an all-new 450cc fuel injected engine. The unique forward-tilted construction is fed by a reversed airbox and fuel tank for mass centralization and a low center of gravity.

The rear swingarm pivot runs through the front sprocket allowing constant chain tension throughout, and an extra-long swing-arm mated to an Ohlin's rear shock delivers

UNSTOPPABLE TRACTION

View the groundbreaking G 450 X at bmwrevolution.com

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since 1923



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